The compasse of a Christian, directing them that be tossed in the vvaues of this vvorlde vnto Christ Iesus.

Matthew xj. Chap. 28. v.

Come vnto mee all yee that trauaile and are heauie laden, and I will refresh you. &c.

LONDON.
Imprinted by John Wolfe, for John Parison the yonger, dwelling in Paternoster rowe, at the signe of the golden Ancore.

1. CAP.

A description of the naturall corruption wherewith mankinde is infected by the contagion of sinne.

2. CAP.

By what meanes mans corruptiō is made knowne vnto him: and of the endes of the Lawe.

3. CAP.

Man knowinge his corruption by the Lawe, is thereby humbled and drawne to repentance, and prepared to receiue the promisses of the Gospell.

4. CAP.

Of faith and the nature and effectes thereof, offred in the Gospell.

Tho: Baker Coll: Jo: Socius electus

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To the right worshipfull & *his singuler good benefactour M.* William Webbe, *Alderman and* Shrine of London. A. P. wisheth al ioy & peace both of body and soule, with *happines in the Lord to euerlasting.*

AFter I had called into my remébrance your worships great liberalitie and bountifulnes towards me at sondrie times; and on thother side my own ingratitude & vnthankfulnesse for the same: I began to thinke with my selfe that there was some christian duetie neglected of me, which ought of necessitie to haue beene performed. The consideration whereof hath moued me to put my penne vnto paper, and to write as foloweth, hoping thereby (although not fullie to recompéce your goodnesse towards me, which I am neuer able:) yet to discharge some parte of christian duetie by shewing my selfe thankfull vnto you againe for the same. Not by preseting anie earthlie gift which I am not able;

neither (ſure I am) do you looke for anie ſuch thing at my hand, but rather by beſtowing vpō your worſhip a litle handfull of ſpirituall and heauenlie crommes, which I, (who am a poore wretch) haue through earneſt prayer found and gathered vp vnderneath the table of the Lord. And therefore, although they be but fewe and verie ſmale, yet becauſe they are ſuch as were onelie takē from his Table: I do not doubt but that you will accept of them. Crommes alſo I call them, becauſe they are nouriſhing, and ſuch as do feede, although not the bodie to a temporal life; yet both ſoule & bodie vnto a ſpirituall and heauenlie life; which is not for a time but euerlaſting, if they be eaten with the teeth of a true faith which worketh by loue, & diſgeſted in the ſtomake by the heate of perfect patience, & conſtant perſeuerance therein vnto the end. And thus being receiued, it is no matter how ſmall the quantitie bee which we receiue of it. Knowe you not what is written, a litle

litle Leauen leaueneth the whole lumpe of dowe? What is ſmaler in the whole world thē a litle graine of muſtard ſeede? & yet if the ſame be ſowne in fruitfull grounde, the increaſe is wonderfull: for it groeth vp to a great tree, that the fowls of heauen maie make theire neſtes in the branches thereof. To theſe & ſuch like ſimilitudes is the worde of God compared, which ſheweth vnto vs the efficacie & ſtrēgth therof. For the ſeede of the worde of god is ſo pretious & of ſuch power, that if neuer ſo ſmall a graine therof do fall on the ground of an hūble heart, it bringeth forth fruit verie plentifull 30. 40. 60. 100. fold. &c. according to the wiſdome of the ſower, & the goodnes of the groūd which it is ſowed vpon. For let vs hold this alwaies as a certaine rule, that there is neuer anie fault to be found in the ſower, nor in the pretious ſeede of the worde which is ſowne: but the fault (if there be anie) muſt needes be founde out in the grounde which receiueth it, Matth. 13

Luke.8. which if there be path waies it lyeth a loft and can not enter, but the foules of heauen take it awaie: or if it be stonie ground which receiueth the same, it hath a litle ẽtrance, but lacketh roote, & therfore as soone as the sunne of persecution cõmeth vpon it, the same withereth also, & can not prosper: or els if the groũd be thornie, the thornes growe vp with the seede & choake the same, so that it can not bring forth fruite accordinglie. By the path waies is ment, either those Papistes vvhose heartes are so hard troden with the feete of mens traditions, and are so farre ouertaken with the credite of man his vaine imaginations, that the worde can take no place in thẽ: or els those Atheistes, which are of no religion and therefore come to the seruice of God rather of custome then of conscience to profit thereby. By the stonie grounde is ment, those mouth gospellers which seeme in the time of peace to bee verie religiouse, but when anie trouble or daunger commeth, then they

they fal awaie and do not continue, becauſe it was onelie in theire mouthes and not in theire heartes; which is the rooting place & where it ought chieflie to haue bene. And by the thornie grounde we vnderſtand thoſe couetous men of the world, which haue a greater care to become rich then righteous: and therefore oftentimes preferre the trieing of theire Oxen before the Lordes table; yea and they deſire Chriſt to depart out of their coaſtes before they woulde beare the loſſe of theire ſwine. Well, then theſe things being well weighed and conſidered vpon, maie bee a good meane to procure vs vvith more circumſpection to looke into our ſelues and ſearch out the ground of our owne heartes, before we come to the reading and hearing of the vvord preached, leſt we beinge anie of theſe vnfruitfull groundes ſhoulde returne without profitte, nay that which is more, euen worſe then when we came vnto it: for it is vnpoſsible that the word

Luke 5. ver.

Mark. 5. ver.

light for vs to examine our affections by, frō the which euerie worke doth proceed; and so we findinge the *Lord* to be the heade Springe from whom floweth all the good vvhich vve doe: may in euerie of our vvorkes, confesse our ovvne vnprofitablenesse, and so bring vnto him in all and euerie of our vvorks that acceptable *Sacrifice* of a contrite & broken heart which he vvill neuer despise &c.

Psalm. 51. 17

The *Lord* (vvho is rich in mercy & greate in glorie,) heape vpon your worshippe the riches of his grace, blesse and sanctifie you both in body and soule, and happely finish that which he hath in you so gratiously begonne, to the glory of his name, and your owne comforte in Iesu Christ our Lord. Amen.

London. 1582. May. 26.

Your worshipes most humble at commaundement. A. P.

A Description of the natural *corruption wherewith mankind is infected by the contagion of sinne.*

IT is a verie lamentable thing to beholde that bottomles sinke of corruption and sin which lyeth hid in mãs nature: and yet farre more lamentable to behold his grosse and monstrous blindnes, which is so palpable, ẏ although there be no sparkell of goodnes in him: nay, although he be so defiled with sinne, that he is become as blacke as euer was the blacke horsse, which is spoken of in the reuelation; So that frõ the croune of the head to the soole of the foote, there be nothing but woundes, sores, and swellings full of corruption; Yea, although his verie righteousnes be as a verie clout defiled with corrupt blode, and his wisdome tending alltogether vnto death and destruction: For this is the state of euery naturall man, vntill such

Reuel.6.5.

Esa.1.6.

Esa.64.6.

such time as he be borne againe: yet notwithstanding I say his blindnes is such: that in no wise he can bee brought to haue any distrust or misliking of himselfe, but rather is caried away with a vaine persuation of that which ought to be in him, and is not in truethy: hauing his heart lifted vp in pride; because he hath an outwarde knowledg of some thing that appertaineth vnto religion and christian conuersation: thinking it a sufficient perfection, to be able how to define Repentance, although he neuer feele the effect thereof in him selfe. For his owne sins which are so monstrous and wherein he hath euery way so grieuously offended God, a most daungerous disease and incurable, not because there is no remedie soone to heale it: but rather because the sensleſnesse of our nature is such, that in no wise we can be brought to any feeling of our disease, yea, and the more daungerously we are infected therewith, the lesse willing are we to yelde vnto our sinnes; nay that which is worst, the more perfecte we thinke our selues to be. And therefore

these things considered: how or which way should we be brought to receyue any medicine for the curing thereof. For the patient must first of necessitie be brought to feele his disease & knowe the daunger thereof, before he can or will haue any desire of the Phisition. In this sense spake our saiour Christ when he vsed these words. The whole neede no Phisition, but those that are sicke. Not that there were or are at any time any so perfect which neede not Christ, who is the heauenly Phisition of our soules: but rather shewing thereby how litle Christ our saiour shal profit those which perswade themselues to be whole without him by his ministerie, not for that he can not as I haue before shewed, but rather because they will not: in so much as they feele not their owne disease, nor knowe the daunger therof. How truely therfore doth the Prophet vse these wordes. Oh, Israel thy damnation is of thy selfe. The Lord offreth vs mercy, but we refuse it; he craueth, but we will not heare; he knocketh, but we will not open; and

Mat. 9. 12. Mark. 2. 17. Luke 5. 31.

why

why, becauſe we perſwade our ſelues that we haue no neede of his helpe: not ỹ there is any ſo rude as to vtter the ſame in wordes. But the fooliſh man hath ſaid in his heart there is no God. Sure, our great and penſiue care ỹ we haue in labouring by right and wronge to become rich in thoſe things that ſhal periſh; And on the other ſide our wonderfull careleſneſſe in ſeeking thoſe heauenly riches which will neuer decaye, and whereby we are made righteous: If there were no other thing, this is ſufficient to laye open our ſhame euen vnto the whole world, not as in a glaſſe or darke ſpeaking, but face to face, whereby it may plainely bee ſeene that they truſt more in the creature, Then in God, which is the Creator, who be bleſſed for euer and euer. Amen.

Pſal.14.1.& 53.1.

Rom.1.5.

Truely the Lord hath not deſerued to be thus recompenſed at our handes, his mercies do require better merites then theſe are: for what could he haue done more for his vineyard Iſrael, then he hath done vnto England. And how commeth it then that our fruit is no-

Eſa.5.4.

thing

thing but wild grapes. We al confesse that the night is past long since, and why do we not beginne to cast off the workes of darknesse. Wel, if God spared not the naturall branches for this and such like corruptions: how shall he spare vs which are the wild olives? if our sinnes be no lesse, the iudgementes and threatnings of God in his worde are plentifully thundred out against vs: but alas, we do not beleue them; and as for his mercies we make them a bulwarke vnto our sinnes. As for example, admonish any man at any time of his sinnes, this will be his answere accustomably. Muth God is mercifull, loe, thus we imagine of his mercies that we vtterly ouerthrowe & contemne his iustice. But in the end we shall knowe and well vnderstand, that as mercie floweth from him towardes the penitent beleeuer: so iudgment with seueritie in no lesse measure commeth from him vpon the obstinate and disobedient sinners. But how should we be brought to beleeue these things? our heartes are so choaked with infidelitie that we will giue

credite

credit to nothing before we feele or see it put before our eyes. Surely our securitie is such, ỹ we may be very wel compared vnto an Ore which is driuẽ to the Butchers stall; or a fole led to the stockes: for the property of an Ore is when he is driuen to the Butchers stall to go ioyfully, because his hope is that he shall be driuen to some better pasture, and neuer feareth vntill the axe be readie to be laid vpon his head. So likewise a fole when he is led to the stockes, goeth wilfully and neuer feareth vntil his feete bee fast snared therein. A comparison verie fit for the securitie of this age, who in like manner goeth forwardes weltering in the broade way without remorse of conscience, perswading them selues that that is the perfect waye, because the greatest nomber do walke therein, and neuer perceiue theire owne folly, vntill they be snared in the trappes of destruction. In the meane time, if anie man seeing them in this case, do pitie theire miserie, and seeke by the authoritie of the worde to reclaime them and set them in the right waye; who is so

deadly

deadly a foe vnto them as such an one seemeth to be. For they can in no wise digest his counsell, and therefore it commeth to passe oftentimes, that in steade of profiting, they purchase vnto themselues some blemish, as it is written in the prouerbes. He that reproueth a scorner getteth a blot; What is, some reprochfull worde or priuie blemish otherwise by slaunder or so forth. Not that they are made worse therby before the Lord, but rather better, yet men do so accounte of it: and therefore greate cause haue Gods children to proceede without discouraging in exhortation, admonition, and reproofe also, seeing God doth so well allow of it, when occasion is offred, although it come so to passe oftentimes, that they cast pearles before swine and giue that which is holie vnto dogges: He that obserueth the winde shall neuer sowe. So likewise they which haue an eye always vnto the affections of men and will knowe what entertainment their admonitions and reproofe shal haue before they will bestowe them, can neuer profitte

Prouerb.

Mat. 7.6.

Prouer.

thereby: for that in ſo doing they ſeeke rather to pleaſe men and feede theire humors, then that god ſhould haue his glorie increaſed thereby. Knowe you not what is written. He that will be a man pleaſer, cānot be the ſeruant of God. A moſt dangerous euil to go about to pleaſe thoſe who will not be pleaſed without the diſpleaſing of the Lord: For men commonlye are beſt pleaſed with thoſe which be as themſelues are; and will iuſtifie none, but ſuch as flatter thē in their ſinnes, and ſowe pillowes vnder theire elboes. Truely it is euen a worlde to ſee our blindnes; how wiſe we are to deceiue our ſelues in ſuch matters as theſe are: for we are ready to beſtow great coſt, yea and burden our ſelues very largely without grudging, ſo that wee may procure the acquaintance and familiaritie of thaſe which will flatter vs, & feede our affections at the full, eſpecially ye if they be ſuch as goe vnder the name of prophets or righteous men: that thereby wee may cloake our corruptions, and ſeeme to be that which we are not, by ſhrouding our ſelues vn-

Gala. 4. 16.

der

der their profession. And alas, what is this any better then to build vpon the sande, which is an vnstable foundation: nay it is no other then that which Esay speaketh of, Euen to take falsehoode for our refuge, & couer our selues vnder vanitie. Surely a very thinne garment, and such as will not defende vs from the colde in winter, nor yet from the heate of sommer; nay it were well if it would couer our filthy nakednesse: but alas the thinnesse of it is such that the same is not able so to doe. For what grosse blindnesse is it in vs? to thinke our selues well satisfied when wee are praysed of a fewe miserable men, which possiblie are as blinde as we our selues be: for that is all the gaine wee can purchase by it. May let mee goe farth... can it profite vs to haue the acqu...ances? praise of all the learned and godlye in the worlde: If our owne conscience do accuse vs before the Lord, who is far greater, then the same, to condemn vs. For as we are before the Lord, so we are in deede, and not as men doe account of vs: who oftentimes doe take

the garments of Gods deare saints, & giue them vnto strangers, and therefore it behoueth vs to seeke for a better garment then the prayses of men only to couer our selues withall; least that when we think our selues to be in best case, then our nakednes should be discouered and layde open, not onely to our owne consciences, but also to the whole worlde, who will then laugh at our shame.

Wel therfore to the end y we may auoid these inconueniences, & remaine no longer so blinde as to become detriments of our selues, by so much respecting of mens prayses, and in the meane time lose the praise of God which is the true praise indede: To the ends I say that wee may auoide this, it is needeful for vs to haue an eye alwaies vnto our affections in all our actions and enterprises whatsoeuer, and for whether Gods his glory, the strengthening of our owne faith; and profiting of our brethren be sought onely in doing of them. Otherwise let our deedes be neuer so many, and seeme as glorious as they will; In so much that eue-

ry mans mouth is filled with praysing of vs: yet it is to no purpose, if our consciences doe not witnesse with vs, that these things before repeated, are the things which we in euery of our deedes haue euer cheefest respecte vnto. True it is that Scripture doth greatly commend the receyuing of Prophetes and righteous men into our houses; Yea God hath bound himselfe, by promisse therunto also, that those that do it shall be greatly rewarded: but the question is then, how we ought to receyue the, he (saith the holy Ghost, Which receyueth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receiue a Prophets reward. And againe, He that receiueth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receiue a righteous mans reward.

So heere our Sauiour Christ describeth in plaine wordes, howe we ought to receiue them: that is, as a Prophet, or righteous man, as one that is of the Lordes Houlhold, and sent vnto vs by him; to the ende that we should entertaine him as one of our best guestes: and minister

vnto him such necessaries, as he commeth vnto vs for, because we haue hope also to receiue of him in like manner such spiritual treasures as ꝯ Lord hath endued him withall, to the ende (I say) that we might profit theire bodies vnto a temporall life, and they our soules and bodies both vnto a spiritual and eternall life. With this minde we ought to receiue them, and not for fashions sake; neyther yet to feede our humors: or els it can not be said that we do receiue them as Prophets, or righteous men, but rather as hypocrites and dissemblers: for there are none that will giue theire consent to doe so, vnlesse they bee such. And therefore it behoueth vs, to take heede how we do abuse the Prophets, and Sainctes of God, by thinking that they are so vaine as to be drawne away from the trueth, to feede our corrupt affections. Nay if they be the true Prophets and Saintes of God, rather then they will so doe, they will vtterly forsake our houses, be the plenty therof neuer so greate: yea, (and that which is more) they will shake off the dust of

our streetes from theire feete, as a witnesse against vs: because we would not obey theirs counsell, or rather the Lordes, which is vttered by them. Knowe you not what is written. He that receyueth you, receyueth me, and he that receiueth me, receiueth him that sent me. So then hereby you see plainely, what it is to receyue a Prophet or a righteous man: it is not to receiue him alone, but God the Father and Iesus Christ also, which doe accompany them; and therefore how well welcome should such gestes be vnto vs; not as though we would so much pleasure them, but they altogether profit vs: neyther yet may we by our owne wisdome measure out vnto them, a way and meane whereby we thinke they may pleasure vs best: for that were to set the Lord who doth abase himselfe to be their cõpanion, as it hath bene before proued, to schoole: but rather it behoueth vs to bring our owne wisdome into captiuitie, and content our selues with that meane & order, which the holy Ghost doth moue them to vse for our profiting: whether

it be sower, or sweete, sharpe, or pleas-
sant, iudgement, or mercy, threatning,
or promises, seing the Lord is the dis-
poser of it. Who worketh all things
for the best vnto vs. Receyue ỳ same
with patience and thankfulnes, and
not grutch or murmure for any thing
whatsoeuer commeth vnto vs from
them: humbly acknowledginge our
owne ignorance and blindnes, in cho-
singe vnto our selues, any way or
meane that may profit vs vnto eternall
life: and thus hauing our hearts pre-
pared, we should become fitte ground
to receiue the seede of Gods word vn-
to our endles comfort. For sure it is,
that before the Lord can sow any good
seede in ỳ furrowes of our hard hearts,
he must first of necessitie breake vs, &
mollify the same with the plowes of
his law, & teare in sunder ỳ hard clods
of vices & sins, wt the sharp harrow of
his iudgments: ỳ so the weedes which
our owne flesh do naturally yeeld forth,
may be pluckt vp by ỳ rootes, & scattered
vpon the vpper face of the earth, that
is, made plaine & open before our eyes,
whereby our owne vilanies may be

made

made manifest vnto vs, and we by that meanes driuen forward more earnestly, to seeke for our Physitiō Christ Jesus, and more willingly take ỳ purgations which he by his seruātes shal minister vntō vs, how sharpe so euer it be for curing therof. Daūgerous diseases require sharpe & bitter medicines, to purge out the corruptiō which is the cause of the same; yea & the more daūgerous the disease is, the more sharpe medicine it requireth. Wel thē, if it be so, as it is most true, as by a familiar example it may be made more plaine; ỳ french pockes is a far more daungerous disease, then the meesels, and therfore requireth a more bitter purgation for ỳ curing therof, then the other doth. But our diseas which naturally we are infected with, is far more perilous thē eyther ỳ meesels or frenshe pockes: for it is no better then a most lothsome lepry, which doth not only infect the hād or foote, but the whole body and euery member therof, within and without, so that there is no place frē; which disease although it bee not bodely breaking out into sores and deformeties

in

in the open face of the world, which may make vs lothsome vnto the eyes of men, and hasten our naturall death: yet it is spirituall, and breaketh out into blasphemous swearinge, lying, deceauing, cursed speaking, slaunder, murder, drunckennesse, and such like, which maketh vs lothsome in the eyes of the eternal God; and bringeth speedely vpon vs, though not bodely death, yet that spirituall and eternall death of both bodie and soule in hell fire, which is endlesse, endlesse, and hopelesse, from which ỳ Lord for his Christ his sake deliuer vs all. Amen.

Cap. II.

By what meanes mans corruption is made knowen vnto him; and of the ends of the Lawe.

MOst true it is, that we are all by nature infected with this spirituall leprosie of sinne and corruption, which maketh vs lothsome in the eyes of the almighty as it hath beene already somewhat touched, and yet not so sufficient

ficiently as the necessitie of the matter requireth. For although the Disease be both grieuous and generall, yet the knowledge & feeling thereof is very sparing; and although that all bee infected with the same, yet not one amongest a thousand, will in trueth confesse him selfe so to be; such is the blindnes of our stubborne and crooked nature, as for example: aske a naturall man, which hath his life as voyd of the feare of God, as it may be, whether he be proud, (couetous, deceiptfull, & blasphemer of the name of God) or how much his nature is enclyned thereunto, he will straight wayes answere with a shew of thankfulnes vnto God, affirming that his nature both is and hath bene alwayes from his youth, free from any such things, wondring euen with cursed speaches, how, why, or for what cause, any man should conceiue so euil an opinion of him. O marulous blindnes, and yet commonly this will be theire answere, although there appeare no better fruit in all the actions of their life: and thus Satan pulleth vs forward from euill to worse, in adding

vnto

vnto our blindnes, wilfulstubbernes, and therfore one degree farther off frō being cured: for if it were so that wee were simply blinde, there were some hope that we would receiue light whē occasiō is offred, to discerne some part of our disease with desire to be cured, because of the danger, which otherwise through the longe continuance of it, might ensue vpon vs. But seeing it is far otherwise, that wee are not onelye blinde, but also through the vaine wisdome of our owne conceits, carryed away in a false perswasiō of our selues, that we do both knowe and very well perceiue, our owne estate to be good, yea and so perfect, that the same can by no meanes be bettered. Seeing it is so I say, how, or which way is it possible for anye man to worke for our health, when we our selues, be so farre off frō any dread or doubt of being sick. What then? shal we leaue it thus ruinous as we finde it? God forbid: for ẏ which is vnpossible to men, is possible wt God. And although the plater be nothing and the vvaterer as litle vvorth, except the Lord giue increase: yet it is

Corin. 3. 6.

sinne

sinne in the planter not to plant, and no better in the waterer not to water, how rude & vnfruitful soeuer ỹ barren ground of mens heart seeme to be vnto them, and why, because we know not what the Lord will bring to passe by their labours, who by the ministery of his word, doth not only cleanse the lepers, and giue sight vnto the blind, but also bringeth far more mightie thinges to passe; as in turninge rauninge wolues into meeke lambes; and cruel Leopards into gentle Kids; and deuouring Lyons into tame Calues; yea and the venemous Aspes or Cockatrices into the nature of innocent & delightfull children; not that beastes are thus changed, but the holy Ghost meaneth the wilde and sauage affections of men, who although they bee as rauening, deuouring, cruell and venemous, as any of these wilde beastes, yet the power and force of the worde & gospel of Iesus Christ is such ỹ it will make thẽ as tame, meeke, gentle and delightfull as Lambes, Kids, Calues, or little children not so only, but much more: for ỹ excellencie of it is such, that it

it will rayse vp those ỹ be dead, eue to life againe, & therfore great cause haue ỹ ministers & saints of God, eue with boldnes and exceeding hope, to take this spirituall weapon, both in hearte and hand, as a sufficient armoure, to stand and preuaile, against all the engins and fiery dartes of ỹ wicked, how great and cruell soeuer they seeme to be. For it is the word of God onelye, which casteth down strong holds, and euery thing which exalteth it selfe, against the knowledge of God; yea and bringeth into captiuitie euery affection vnto the obedience of Christ: which worde, as it is a sufficient defence against all dangers; a perfect purgation to cleanse vs from all ill humors; yea a most precious salue to heale al diseases or woundes whatsoeuer: so also it is a most cleare and bright candle to lighten our blinde eyes, whereby wee may perfectly behold, not onely ỹ grieuousnesse of our disease, but also the great danger therof; a point very needfull and chiefly to be obserued, as the first step which belongeth to true and vnfayned christianitie. For before we

1.Cor.10.5.
Luk.10.17.18.

vve knowe our disease which is sinne, how shal we vnderstand the danger & inconuenience that it subiecteth vs vnto, which is the wrath & euerlasting curse of God; and hauing our eyes once shut vp from beholding the danger and discommoditie of sinne, which way is it possible for vs to be brought to feare and tremblinge at the iudgements and heauy threatnings of God in his woords, seeing we haue no credit therein: and then hauing our heartes thus hardened, how far off are we frō repentance: but much farther off from faith, whereby alone vve are iustified before the Lord, and vvithout the vvhich it is impossible to please him. Well then, to the ende that wee may auoide these great inconueniēces, and be vnfaynedlye brought vnto the hope of Christ his kingdome: order requireth that we begin to inlarge vpon this first point or step thereunto, which is to proue and make knowen vnto vs, by the woorde of God, our disease, that we are all infected, with this spirituall leprosie of sin: cōcerning which matter the Scriptures are very plen-

Rom. 3. 28.
Ga. 2. 16. 22.
Hebr. 11. 6.

Psal. 51. 8.

tiful

tifull. Dauid in the Psalme vseth these
Iob.25.4. wordes: We are borne in iniquitie,
and in sinne hath our mother con-
ceaued vs. Iob considering this, ma-
keth it an vnpossible thing for vs to be
voyde of sinne: how saith he may a mã
Iay.11.72. be cleere in thy sight, or how may
he which is borne of a woman be
righteous? Like begetteth and bin-
geth forth his like; men gather not
figs of thornes, nor grapes of thistles;
It is contrary to the nature of a crab-
tree to bring forth any other fruit thẽ
crabbes: So likewise man and womã
all generally being sinners, can beget
and bring forth no better then them-
selues. Thinke this therefore with thy
selfe, that if thou be begotten of a man
and borne of a woman, thou must
needes be a sinner. Can the blacke
Moore change his skin? or the Cat
of Mount her Spottes? So vnpossi-
ble a thing it is for thee to change thy
condition and estate that thou waste
borne in, bridle it how thou wilt, and
pretend as much as thou canst; yet
when thou hast done thy best thou art
a sinner, not in parte, but wholie, euen

from

from the soole of the foote, to the crowne of the head, as Esaie saith, in his first chapter: not in worke onely, but also in worde, and not in wordes & workes alone, but also in thoughtes, as it appeareth by that which is written in Genesis. All the thoughtes & imaginations of mans heart are euill continuallie. And yet because we may be more drawn out of our selues, and not deceyued with a shewe of good things, which may seeme to rest in our nature: the holy Ghost telleth vs, that The verie righteousnes of man, is as a defiled cloth, & his wisedome tendeth wholie vnto death, wherein he ouerthroweth euen the best things of our nature. For what should we iudge the righteousnes and wisdome of man, which the holy ghost speaketh of here, to be, but this: his prayer, fasting, and almes deeds, his frequenting of common prayer, Sermons and Sacramentes, his gay and glorious speaches, framed out of the word of God, which hath in them great shew of religion and pietie: but to conclude, whatsoeuer it be, & how glorious a shewe soeuer it hath

Esai. 1.6

Gen. 6.5. & 8.21. Mat. 15.19

Esai. 64.6 Rom. 8.6.

in the eyes of men, yet if it proceeds from no other affection, then that which we haue receyued from our naturall parentes, it is no better accounted off before the Lord then a defiled cloth, and the wages that we shall receyue for the same, no better the death: herein then you may see the trueth of that scripture fulfilled, which telleth vs, that to the vncleane, nothinge is
1. Iohn. 1. 8. cleane: well therefore, Let vs not deceiue our selues, by saying that we haue no sinne, or by supposinge our selues to be in good case, because our sinnes are more tollerable then other mens bee. For the least sin in vs, although it be but in thought, if there bee no stryuinge against the same, or mislyking of it the waight thereof, is no lesse, nor no easier then the euerlasting torment of hell fire. But here some man may obiecte and say, that all these wordes are to no purpose: for who is he that confesseth not himselfe, to be a sinner? True it is that all men in a generall speach doe confesse themselues so to be, yea and perticularly also fro the lippes forwards: but the vnsay-

ned acknowledgement of our sins pier-
ceth far deeper, & commeth more nea-
rer vnto y quicke. For it doth not stir
vp bare wordes in vs alone, but other
things also, which are of farre more
sense and feeling; as a troubled soule,
a penitent and sorowfull spirit, for our
sins committed against God: because
our owne conscience doth tell vs, that
therein we haue greatly offended him,
and prouoked his euerlasting curse to
be powred vpon vs, which as yet wee
see not which way, or how to auoyde:
the consideration whereof, stirreth vp
in vs greate care; much and earnest
prayer, euen with groning sobbes, and
bitter teares, feare also to desire, zeale
and punishment, that by this iudging
of our selues, we might preuēt y iudge-
mentes of God, which otherwise wee
knowe, & do very well perceyue are to
be executed vpon vs. But this may be
made more plaine vnto vs by a familia-
ar example & such a one as we are ve-
ry wel acquainted with, & experienced
in: y theefe or wicked person, which hath
committed some notorious crime, of
theft, murder, or both, so long as yis secre-

is vnknown, he maketh no conscience of it, but eateth and drinketh with the drunkard, and proceedeth forwards in like wickednes; tell such a one in generall speache, that he is a sinner, and there is no doubte, but that hee will willingly yeelde vnto it; but come more nearer vnto him, and tell him that he is a theefe or murderer, and if he bee sure that thou canst bring forth no sufficient proofe of the same, hee will not faile but make thee smart for it, as farre forth as the Lawes of the Realme will giue him leaue. Nowe this selowe which standeth so stoutlie all this while vpon his pantoffles, as though he had receiued greate wrong, his facte beeinge once knowne, and brought to light, and hee him selfe laide holde vpon, to appeare before a iudge, where hee must receyue the sentence of death for his wicked deede, which he hath committed, and seeth no waye howe to auoyde the same: marke then his countenance and see howe all the powers of his bodie are chaunged, into tremblinge and feare; his knees which before

wers

were so stiffe, as we doe willingly yeelde themselues vnto the ground, with weeping and wringing of hands, to craue pardon, labouringe by all meanes and wayes that hee can deuise or procure, euen with greate importunacie, that he may obtaine the same, willingly yeeldinge him selfe vnto the prison, to the fetters, and to the hate yron, so that he may escape with life, he weigheth not these other punishmentes, yea, and the more terrible the sentence of death is, which the iudge doth pronounce against him, the more is his feare and labour to auoyde the same. Whereby you see then, as in a cleare glasse, what it is truely to confesse our sinnes, and by what meanes we are brought thereunto. For as the theefe or wicked person, can not bee brought vnfaynedly to confesse his facte, before it bee made knowne, and hee himselfe attached to appeare before a iudge, to bee condemned for the same: so likewise the case standeth with euery one of vs, who by nature are no better then theeues and murderers before

the Lord, that we can by no meanes bee brought in truely to yelde vnto the same, before the monstrousnesse and vgly shape of these our sinnes, with the paine and penaltie due thereunto, bee set before our owne consciences, and we as it were summoned before Gods iudgement seate, to be condemned for the same: you see also the fruit and effectes, which folowe the true acknowledgment of our sinnes, which is feare, trembling, weeping, wringing of handes, and importunate suite, euery kinde of way for pardon, and the reason is verie good: for if the face of an earthly Iudge which can but kill the body, bee so terible vnto that parte, which is brought before him for his facte: what shall wee thinke then, or howe terrible is the face and sentence of that eternall and heauenly Iudge of Iudges; who after hee hath killed, Apoc.20.11. can cast both bodie and soule into hell fire, and from whose countenance flyeth away both the heauens and the earth. Well then: these comparisons beinge well thought vpon, and

we so perfectlie experienced in the lesser which is before man, will willingly I doubte not yelde vnto the trueth of the greater, which is, when anie mans conscience for sinne, doth somnion him before the Lord.

Let vs not therefore hereafter, bee anie more so blinde and ignorant, as to thinke that we are come to greate perfection in Christianitie before we are entred into the first steppe that appertayneth vnto the trueth thereof; which is the vnfayned acknowledginge of our sinnes: vnfayned I call it, when these passions of the minde before repeated, are stirred vp in vs, through the sighte thereof, otherwise it is fayned and to noe purpose. For if wee call to minde the testimonie of holie scripture to proue and confirme the same, we shall see it and as in a glasse beholde it very plentifully proued, and sufficiently euery way warranted vnto vs, yowe that this hath alwayes bene the Lordes purpose and intent, dealinge with all his children elect, in the beginning of their

theire calling, euen so to humble theire soules, with the sight of their sinnes, that they were almost fettered in the chaines of desperation, as we may see it in the poore Publican, who seemed so vile in his owne eyes, That hee durst not lift them vp to heauen.

Luke.18.13

Act.2.37. So likewise the people of the Iewes, which were conuerted at the preaching of Peter, and the rest of the Apostles, were in such distresse and trouble of minde for theire sinnes, that they could not tell which way to wind out of it, But being pricked in their heartes, cried out vnto the Apostles and saide, men and brethren, what shall we do? Which doth import a marueylous distresse that they were in. A notable example of this also we

Act.16.30. haue in the sixtenth of the Acts, in the conuersion of the keeper of the prison, who when hee sawe the greate power of God in shaking the foundation thereof for the delyuerance of his Saintes, came tremblinge and quakinge, in marueylous feare, saynge, What shall I doe, that I maye bee saued? Which requeste doth

both giue vs to vnderstand, that he iudged him selfe to be no better then a condemned wretch. In like maner the Prophet Abacuk speaking of the beginning of his calling, saith thus of it. When I heard, my bellie trébled, my lips shooke at the voice: rottennesse entred into my bones, and I trembled in my selfe, that I might be spared in the daie of the Lorde. Habacuk.3.16

See, here the Prophete taketh these troubles & anguishes of mind, which hee was brought into by the hearing of the word, as a warrante vnto his owne soule, that the Lord would spare him in the day of euill. A verye apte proofe we haue of this also in the booke of kings, where it was said vnto Iosias the kinge, that because his heart did melt, when he heard the booke of the Lawe read, and those iudgementes pronoūced, which the lord pretended to bring vpon Ierusalem and the temple for the sinnes of Manasses: because (I say) his heart did melt, & he rent his clothes, & wepte at the hearing thereof, therfore the Lord tolde him, that these miseries 2.King.22.19.20.

shoulde not bee in his dayes, but that he shoulde be gathered to his fathers in peace and not see them. And what should I saye of Dauid the king, who beeing a man after Gods owne heart, yea and also a figure of Christe, what wonderfull distresses & anguishes of minde & soule was he in, not only, in ỹ beginning of his calling, but also throughout his whole life, as it appeareth very plentifully in the Psalmes, where he vttereth these voyces. Many saye vnto my soule there is no helpe for him in his God, and agayne: I fainte in my mourning and cause my bedde euerie night to swim with my teares: and againe. howe long wilte thou forget me O Lord for euer? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me, howe long shall I take counsell with my selfe, hauing daily wearines in my heart: and againe, there is nothing sounde in my flesh because of thy displeasure, there is no rest in my bones, because of my sinnes, and againe: my heart trembleth within me, the sorrowes of death are fallen vppon me,

Psal.3.2.

Psal.6.6.

Psal.13.1.2.

Psal.38.3.

Psal.55.4.5.

me, feare and trembling is come vppon me, and an horrible feare hath couered me, yea his troubles were such, and his temptations came so thicke one in the necke of another, that his soule refused comforte, and it seemed vnto him that the Lorde had vtterly reiected his soule, * reade the 88. Psalme. Thus you see it plainely proued out of the word of God, how the Lorde hath alwayes dealte with his children, in calling them vnto the hope of his kingdome, that they might be pricked forewardes to bring vnto him that acceptable sacrifice of a sorowfull spirite, and broken hearte, which hee at no time will despise, but hath bounde him selfe by promise, that at what time soeuer any do come vnto him, which are ouer burdened with the sight of their sinnes, they shall finde refreshing: here you see also the trueth of this doctrine verified: that the Lorde doth first wounde, before he maketh whole; hee first humbleth, before hee doeth exaulte; hee bringeth downe to Hell, before hee raiseth vppe to Heauen,

Psal. 42. 7.

Psal. 77. 2.

*

Psal. 51. 17.

Mat. 11. 28.

Osee. 6. 1.

1 Sam. 2. 6.

and

And to conclude, hee maketh vs to see our miserie, before he will bestow vpon vs his mercy: for to whom is meat most sauery, but to him that is most hungrie; to whome is liberty most delightfull, but to him which is in ỹ most miserablest bondage; and to whom is life most sweete, but to him that is in the greatest danger of death. For offer liberty to such a one as is free from bõdage, or life to him that is in no dãger of death, and they will laugh thee to scorne: but goe to some prison, and offer liberty to him that hath lien long in chaines, and life vnto him that is already iudged to die, and thou shalt see how thãkfully he will receiue thy proffer, and how mindefull he will be of the same. A similitude very fit to teach vs, for what cause the Lord doeth thus deale with his children in humbling of them, to the ende that they may praise him in trueth for deliuering them out of such wonderfull miserie, and neuer be vnmindefull of so great a benefitte. In this sense it was sayde of Mary Magdalẽ, that she loued much, because many sinnes were forgiuen her. For

who

who amongst the children of women, was there euer founde, to be a more greuouser sinner then she, which was a common harlot, and had seuē deuils cast out of her, that is to say, a greate many, we know not the number, and who againe was there euer founde, to shew foorth ẏ like affection of loue vnto our sauiour Christ as she did, after she perceiued that these greate sinnes were forgiuen her; and she redeemed from the danger therof: for she washed his feete with her teares; and wyped them with the heire of her head. In this sense also it is sayd of the Apostle saint Paul, that hee laboured more aboundantly then all the reste of the Apostles, and what moued him so to do, euen this, because hee perceiued that many and grieuous sinnes were forgiuen him. What then? shall wee sin much, that we may loue and laboure much? God forbid. The holy Ghoste hath no such meaninge, neither is it saide that they loued and laboured much, because they had sinned much; but because many sinnes were forgiuen them. There is none of vs all but

Make 16. 2.
Luke. 8. 2.
Iohn. 12. 7.

doe commit many and grieuous sins, and the more wee doe commit the worse we are to be liked, for the lesse doe we loue, and the lesse also is our labour in the waies of Godlines: but if wee were come vnto this steppe, that wee did clearelie see these sinnes, and were perfectlie humbled and wearied with the burden of them, hungring and thirsting for easement, there is no doubt, but ꝑ wee should quickly perceiue and feele, the great loue of God towardes vs, in pardoning and forgiuing all these our sinnes whiche we haue committed against him, and so by that meanes wee also might bee drawē with Mary and Paule to loue and labour much, because many sins are forgiuen vs. But before wee can haue faith to beleeue, and strength to feele that many sinnes are forgiuen vs, we must first learne to knowe & feele both that wee haue committed many sinnes, yea that we doe nothing els but sinne, and to the ende that we may vnfainedly bee brought vnto the knowledge therof, the best meane or way that we can vse, is this, euē to set

the

the purenes and seuerity of the law, as it is in it selfe without Christ, against our owne affections, vntill such time as we be euen plunged into nothing, and perfectly humbled therby: for this is the office of it, & to this end it was ordayned. First to reueale vnto vs our sins, as it is very plainly declared in ỳ epistle to ỳ Romanes, where it is writtẽ, by ỳ lawe shall no flesh be iustified in his sight: for by it cõmeth the knowledge of sin, & againe: the lawe causeth vvrath, for vvhere no lawe is, there is no trãsgressiõ, that is to say, there is no trãsgressiõ knowẽ, according to ỳ which ỳ Apostle speaketh in another place, where hee vseth these words. I had not knowẽ sin, but by the law: for I had not knowẽ that lust had beene sin, except the lawe had said thou shalt not lust, so then, hereby you may easily perceiue, ỳ the first office of the lawe, is to reueale or make knowẽ vnto vs our sinnes. The vse of the Lawe. 1 Rom. 3. 20. Rom. 4. 15. Rom. 7. 7.

Secondlie it goeth forwardes and maketh vs to bee out of measure sinnefull. For to this ende the lawe entered, that sinne might abounde. 2 Rom. 5. 20.

And

And after this sorte the Apostle reasoneth in another place, where hee hath these wordes: Sinne tooke occasion by the commandement and deceiued me, and thereby slew me, wherfore the lawe is holie, and the commandement is holie, and iust, and good. Was that thé which is good made death vnto me, God forbid, but sin, that it might appeare sin, wrought death in me by that which is good, that sinne might be out of measure sinnefull, by the commandement. And thus you see how the Lawe doeth procéede, not onely in reuealing vnto vs our sinnes, but also in making vs out of measure sinnefull: not onely in bewraying the corruptions of oure workes, but also of our wordes: and not of our wordes and workes alone, but also of our thoughts not in condemning some, & iustifying the rest, but in vtterly reiecting of all. If there haue been but one thought in all our life time out of square, and admitte it to be so, that we were free frō sinne, both in worde, worke, & thought: yet the seuerite of the Lawe is suche, that Rom. 7. 13.

that it wholy depriueth vs of all hope of life, because wee were borne in sinne, and hauing thus bewrayed vnto vs such a huge heape of corruptions, whereby we perceyue our selues to be aboue measure sinfull, yea nothing els but a masse and lumpe of sinne, doth it leaue vs so? noe, but then it proceedeth in setting before our eyes, the iudgmentes of God for the same, threatning, condemning, and cursing vs, for not fulfillinge that in euery poynt, which we are not able to performe in one of the least poyntes therof: pronouncing vs: To be cursed in the field, cursed in the towne, cursed in our basket, and store, cursed in our houses, and in the fruite of our owne bodies, cursed in al ỹ we take in hand, yea and that which is worst of all curses in our selues with an euerlasting curse, from the presence of God: who is become vnto vs a terible and sterne iudge, from whose face we shall desire the hils & mountaines to fall vpō vs, and hide vs, thundring out heauy, & fearefull threatnings against vs. That he will be vnto euery sinner, as a

Deut. 28. 16. & 13 &c.

Osee 13. 7. 8

D verie

verie lyon, & as a leoparde in the waie of asshur, he wil meet thē as a she beare that is robbed of her whelpes, & will breake the verie gall of their hearts, he wil be vnto thē as a deuouring flame, & wil raine snares vpō their heads, fier, brimstone, & stormy tēmpest, this shal be the portion of their cup: For euerie sinner must be cast into hel, & all nations that forget God, head & taile, rote & brāch, not one exēpted: for ẏ reward of sin, is death, & we are al sinners: therfore, by ẏ law we are al condēned, we are all vnder ẏ curse, the bōdslaues of satan, and fire brands of hel. Thus ẏ law proceedeth in plunging vs, deeper & deeper, into ẏ pit of sorrow, where we can finde no grōnd: for whē it hath shewed vnto vs our sins, and ẏ vnmeasurablenes of ẏ same, wt the iudgmēts & heauēly plagues of God, to be executed vpō thē, then ētereth ẏ fourth office of ẏ law, which is horror, feare, trēbling, weeping, wringing of hāds, &c. as it hath bene before made plaine vnto vs, by a similitude, & very plētifully proued also out of ẏ scriptures, ẏ the children of God, haue bene subiect vnto these passiōs of ẏ minde & body, before they could come vnto the hope of his kingdome, & therfore lesse may be spoken of it now, wel thē the last office

Iere. 5. 14. Psalm. 11. 9.

Psalm. 9. 17.

4. office of the Law.

5. Office of the Lawe.

of the law, is, that it sēdeth vs vnto christ, as ỹ Apostle witnesseth: Christ is the end of the Law for righteousnesse, vnto all that beleue, and againe, The law is our schole master, to bring vs vnto Christ, that we may be made righteous by faith. So thē thereby it is plaine, that ỹ last office of ỹ law, is to send vs vnto Christ, and marke it for a special point, ỹ it is the last office therof, & not ỹ first: for the Law must of necessitie proceed vpō vs, by these steps before repeated: ỹ we may be as it were killed in our selues, from all hope of fleshly righteousnes before we can be prepared, to receyue ỹ life which is by Christ. So thē thereby you see ỹ the lord in cōuerting of a soule, doth trulie worke a miracle, & raise them which are dead to life againe, and therfore they do abuse ỹ gospel, which will presume, vpō ỹ cōforts therof, before such time as ỹ law hath thus hūbled thē: for most certaine it is, that they which so deale, do deceiue thē selues, to ỹ ēcrease of pride & security. For as the law wout the gospel, driueth to dispaire, so in like maner ỹ gospel wout the law, maketh vs to presume, & therfore of necessitie both worke together, but ỹ law hath the first place: for vntil such time as ỹ law hath done his office, in hūbling of vs, ỹ gospel cā not profit

Rom. 10.

Galat. 3.

neyther yet doth the same appertaine vnto vs, no more then a plaister, or pleasant healing salue, doth belong vnto that wound which is full of corruption, and rottennesse, euen to the bone: for you know that vnto such a woūd, there belongeth first knyues and launcers, to open the same, and then sharpe and bitter salue to draw out the corruption, and eate out the deade flesh thereof, before there come any healing plaister neere it: the nature wherof is to close vp and skinne the vpper parts of the wounde, and clense all the corruption and deade flesh within, which afterward breede to great inconuenience, and make the wounde far more daungerous.

Euē so it fareth with all those which are wounded with the venemous dart of selfe loue: which wound beinge choaked with the corruption, and deade flesh of couetousnesse and pride, and yet, will vse no other medicine for the curing thereof, then that pleasante healinge salue of the Gospell, which if they knewe in trueth howe litle the same did profite them, before

such

such time as the sharpe launcinge knife of Gods Lawe had opened the woundes, and the bitter salues of his iudgementes, and sharpe threatninges eaten out the rottennesse thereof, they would goe an other waye to worke, and vse a more sounder dyet, for the obtayninge of health, although it bee verie tedious and sharpe at the first. Surely it is very lamentable to behold the grosse blindnesse and securitie of our age: for the most parte of vs, nay almost euery one, doe thinke that christianitie, doth wholy rest in an outward shewe of wordes: and therefore if wee canne come to the vnderstandinge of some places of the scripture, whereby we may bee able to define and proue, what faith is, and the obiecte, vpon whome the same taketh holde: we thinke it to be such a perfection. as we neede goe no further, and that there can be no better Christians in the worlde, then we our selues are, although there be no more remorse of conscience for sinne in vs, then there is in a blinde beast.

But alasse let vs thinke or knowe as much as we will or can, in this sorte, and let other men which be as blinde as wee our selues are, praise vs for our knowledge, as much as they list, yet al this wil stand for no paymẽt before the Lord, nor bringe one sparkell of warrant vnto our soules, whereby we may assure our selues to be in his fauour; who onely looketh vpon a troubled soule, which is humbled with the sight of his sinnes, and hath promised to power his Spirit vpõ those that tremble at his worde. Therefore if thou wilt make a true examination of thine estate between God and thee, whether thy faith towardes him be vnfayned or not, proue not the foundation thereof, by thy knowledge, how much or whom thou doest knowe, but rather by the feare, howe much or whome thou doest feare. For in trueth there is neyther knowledge nor faith, except the beginninge thereof bee feare, as it is manifest in diuers places of the prouerbes. The feare of the Lorde is the beginning of wisdome. By

Psal 51. Esai.66.2

wisdome

wisdome in that place is meante all things that belonge vnto the knowledge & saluation of a Christian man. and yet here you see, that ỹ holy Ghost sheweth in plaine wordes, that the feare of the Lord is the beginninge of it: and who knoweth not that faith is the chiefest and onely thinge which belongeth vnto euery Christian, for the attayning of saluation: therefore the beginning of faith is feare, which feare is stirred vp in vs, through remorse and conscience for sinne, which sinne also is reuealed vnto vs by the Lawe: and therefore if feare be not the beginning and first fruit of thy faith, thou hast good cause to doubte of it, and to thinke with thy selfe, that thou arte come vnto Christ before the Father draweth, and our sauiour Christ telleth vs plainly, that no man can come vnto him, except the Father do first drawe him, which word drawing, doth importe in vs, a marueylouse vnwillingnesse, because the way seemeth verie tedious and vnpleasante vnto vs, vntill such time, as wee come vnto Christ, that is, vntill wee

Iohn. 6. 44

haue a iustifyinge faith to beleeue in him. And therefore that rashe and forged faith which men doe drawe vnto them selues without the Lord, that is without remorse and conscience for sinne, may very fitly be compared, vnto the faith of him, which is spoken off in the Gospel after saint Matthew, who came to our Sauiour Christ, and
Mat.8.19.20. saide vnto him, Master I will folowe thee whither so euer thou goest. But what was the entertainement, that our Sauiour Christ gaue him, he telleth him that ỳ Foxes haue holes, and the foules of the aire haue nestes, but the Sonne of man hath not where to lay his head: meaning that whereas vnto an earthly man for a while it may seeme an excellent and sweet thinge to folowe, that is to professe Christ: yet when he must come to the denying of him selfe, and to renounce the loue of eternall things, it will be veris bitter and vnpleasant vnto him. Whereby you see the entertainement and welcome of those which are so hastie to come before they bee called, that is, in the pride of theire

hearte.

heartes, without any consideration of their owne miserie, & neede they haue of him; nay rather, as though hee had neede of them: for certaine it is, that there are a great many, which when they haue done any small thing, that belongeth vnto the duetie of a Christian, doe thinke in that poinct that the Lord had neede of them, and therefore is become their debter for doinge it. But alack, it is not so, the good or euill which we doe, shall profit or hurte our selues; we cannot enriche the Lord w̄ any thing that we are able to doe, who draweth both ỹ sinners, and the deuils to set forth his glory, and therefore can as well be glorified in our condemnation, as in our saluation. But to leaue this, and come to our former matter: these ready fellowes which are so soone ripe, will be as quickly rotten; those ỹ are so hastie to followe Christ vnto the breaking of bread, that they maye fill their bellies, if they shall but heare this woyce from him; Sell all you haue and giue it to the poore: although hee promise them neuer so greate treasure in heauen, yet they will forsake him, if it

be to

be to the vtter destruction and famishing both of body & soule euerlastingly. Take me not here, that I goe about to condemne our readmesse and speede in turning vnto Christ if it be in trueth; neither is it my purpose to withdrawe any man from reading & meditating vpon the sweete promises of the Gospel: for the Lord hath many wayes to conuert vs by, and this may very wel be one, euen the consideratiō of his great mercies offred vnto vs in Christ, which may be a good meane to bringe vs to the consideration of our owne vnworthines and vnthankfulnes for the same, and of our great miseries without it, and so be vnfaynedly brought vnto Christ: But rather my purpose is to beate downe our vayne boastinge of faith, when it is with so little fruite, as though it were possible for vs to be vpō the top of Jacobs ladder, before we come neere the foot therof, and our heedeles presumings vpon Christ, without any remorse or cōscience for sinne, as though the Lord did iustifie and appoint those vnto eternal saluation whō he would neuer sanctify

Gen. 28. 12.

vnto

vnto holines of life: these sinners are they, against whom chiefly hetherto I haue proceaded, to this end ỳ they may (if it be possible) be pulled away from ỳ grosse absurditie of putting religiõ in bare names, titles, & figures, as though it were a matter of indifferencie, whether they which call vpon the name of this lord did depart frõ iniquity or not: to ỳ end, I say, ỳ we may put no more such confidence in vaine shadowes, which are without all trueth of substance, & be cõstantly perswaded in our selues ỳ before we can liue vnto righteousnes, we must dy vnto sin: and before we can be vnseperably ioined vnto Christ, wee must vtterly be rent away from our selues, and for our miserie without him, who from euerlasting is appoynted of God his father, to be a Physitiõ only vnto those which are sick, and not vnto those which perswade themselues that they are whole; and hath bounde himselfe also by promise to satisfie the hungry, & not those which are full; to giue sighte vnto the blinde, & not vnto those which suppose themselues to see wel inough already,

that

that God may be all in all, and Christ haue the whole glorye of our saluinge health. As hee who hath troden the winepresse of Gods wrath alone for vs, without any to help him, and to the end alls that euerie mouth may bee stopped, and all the world be found culpable before the Lord, who hath shutte vp all vnder sinne, that he may haue mercy on all, not all that are sinners, but euery one that confesseth himselfe so to be, which hee graunt vs for his mercies sake, Amen.

Chap. III.

The corruption of man, knowen by the Lawe, is therby humbled, & he drawē to repentance, and prepared to receiue the promises of the Gospell.

HAuinge before shewed the corruptions of our nature, and by what meanes ꝑ sinne is made knowē vnto vs, euen by the lawe, which must of necessitie passe vpon vs by these rules before repeated, that we may be humbled in the sight of our sinnes, and

wearyed with the burden of them, before we can be prepared to come vnto Christ. And how that they doe marvellously abuse the Gospel, which will presume vpon the sweets promyses thereof, before the Lawe hath thus humbled thē. In so much that Christ is the ende of the Lawe, and not the beginning.

Nowe it followeth that we speake somewhat of those that abuse the lawe, and of the meanes how to shunne & avoyde the abusing of it. Those which doe abuse the Lawe, are of two sorts: the one are they that will be iustified for doing those things therein commanded: the other are those which despaire because they are not able to doe them. Concerninge the firste, that is, those which will be iustifyed by the Lawe, let them knowe that the Lawe was not giuen vnto vs to that ende, as the Apostle witnesseth to the Romanes. By the Lawe shall no flesh be iustified in the sight of God. Further more the Law doth iustifie none but those which are the fulfillers of it, and none can fulfill the same, but those which

Two abusers of the Lawe
1. In presumption.
2. In dispaire

Deut. 28. 26
Gal. 3. 10.
Iam. 2.

which are free from sin, both in birth, thought, and action: but we are polluted in all these, as it hath been before declared.

Christ alone is hee, in whom this perfection and cleanness is to be found, he only hath fulfilled it for vs, and is iustified by the same before his father, and hath also borne the punishmente due vnto vs, for breakinge of it, that we which beleeue might be made iust in his iustice, and not in the iustice of ỹ lawe, which is so farre from iustifying of vs, that if but the least title thereof shoulde be laide vpon our consciences without Christ, it would euē condēne vs downe to the bottome of hell, and therfore it must needes be, that they do marueylously abuse the Lawe, and Christ Jesus in like sorte, which will be iustified by it: they abuse the Lawe in presumptinge to be iustified by that which is appointed to humble them; and Christ Jesus also, in taking vpon them his pureness and perfection, in so much as hee alone was appoynted of his Father, to bee the fulfiller of it.

They

They abuse him also, in makinge hys death and suffringes to be of none effects, but caste them in the duste as things needeleste: for so reasoneth the Apostle to the Galathians, If righteousneſſe be of the lawe, then Christ dyed without a cause. And againe in another place, If they which are of the lawe, be heires, faith is made voide, and the promiſe of none effecte. Gal.2.21. Rom.4.14

Here you see then what a grieuous absurditie they fall into, that doe seeke iuſtification in the Lawe, which was onely giuen forth to reueyle vnto vs the perfection and holyneſſe of God, and our owne imperfection and vileneſſe, that hee alone might be founde true, and we lyers, hee iuſte, and wee vniuſte: and yet contrarye to this office, which the Lorde hath appoynted it vnto, and contrary vnto the Lawe of our owne members, which wee see to bee rebellious, and againſte the Lawe of God, will preſume vpon the puritie and perfection thereof.

as

as if the strength of it did rest within the compasse of our filthy bowels, and so make our selues equall vnto God, a marueylous pride, and doth very well declare vnto vs, who it is that is Antichrist. And thus muche for the first abusers of the Lawe.

2. Lawe abused by dispaire.

Secondly, the other sort which doe abuse it, are those that doe dispaire, because they see themselues not able to doe the same: it hath beene sufficiently declared already, that the Law was not giuen for th to the end that we should doe it, but rather to shew what we are not able to doe, that thereby we might be driue from our selues and from the Lawe also, to seeke for helpe elsewhere. For sure it is, that if we do rest in our selues, or in any * actiue righteousnes of the Lawe, the ende thereof must needes be desperation, for this cause the Lawe without Christ is called in the Scripture, A minister of death, the killing letter, yea, for neyther we nor our fathers were euer able to beare, and let it be so, or let it be that debt of ten thousande talentes which we are neuer able to pay: nay, and

* Righteousnes actiue is to looke to be iustified by doing of good deedes and by the merits of man.
2 Cor. 3. 6, 7
Actes 15. 10.

and our estate on the other side, so poore and needy as we are not able to discharge the least mite therest, (as in truetth we are not;) yet let us knowe, that the same is limited, and hath no further authoritie, then to humble us, and therefore they which doe let it passe any further vpon them, do not rightly vse the Lawe, but rather greatly abuse the same, to the deprivinge of them selues, from all hope of saluation. if they returne not in time, and come vnto Christ, who the, and at that time, doth chiefly and onely call them, as it is in the 11 of Matthew. Come vnto me all ye that are vvearie & laden, and I vvill ease you, take my yoke vpon you and learne of me that I am meeke and lovvlie in hearte, and ye shall finde rest vnto your soules, for my yoke is easie & my burden is light: here you see then, howe greatly they ouershote them selues, which to charge the Lord w vnpossible things, as if he did require such a duety at their handes, & lay such a heauy & intollerable burden, vpo their neckes, as it is impossible for the to beare: for this place

Mat. 11. 28.

doth plainely confute them, and maks
their cauillation to be of none effect,
which telleth vs that the Lords burde
is light, & his poke easie, and therefore
if any mans conscience be so ouerbur-
dened with the sight of his sins that he
falleth into desperation, let him not
thinke that it is the Lorde which hath
laid this burden vpon him, but rather
that he himselfe hath drawne it vpon
his owne necke, by abusing the Lawe
through infidelitie, because he cōmeth
not vnto Christ: for ỹ end of the Lawe
is faith in Christ, and not desperation.
True it is, ỹ euery one seeth not this,
and therefore when the stinge of death
at any time is awaked vp in their co-
sciences, & they looking no other way
for ease ment, but into the actiue righte-
ousnesse of the Lawe, which the more
they looke into, the further they are frō
helpe, and the deeper they plunge thē
selues into sorrow, so that in the ende
it must needes come to passe, ỹ they
fall into wonderfull diseases & anguis-
shes, both of minde and soule as if they
were in ỹ present torments of hel fire.
Hence it is also ỹ those woful & heauy

out-

outcryes doe arise: I am damned, I haue sinned against the holy ghost, my sinnes are so greate y God will neuer forgiue them, and therfore wish that they had neuer bene borne, or y theire liues were cut short, by some vnlawfull meanes: as hanging, drowning, cutting, sticking, with theire own hands, are ready oft times to execute, vpō theselues. But to leaue these which are so far gone, standing or falling to theire own master, and come vnto those who in theire distresses & troubles of minde & bodie, haue some sparkle of the seede of God in them. For sure it is that the deare children of God art times are vnto far gone this way, and brought as it were euen to y lowest pit of sorte to, where they can hardly perceiue any comfort at all: may rather do shew some toke of reprobatō in their anguishes. As it may seeme vnto him, who is not well experienced in y afflictions which are common vnto Gods children. The cause of which great breach y the enemie hath made into them, may very well bee in their owne selues, which through ignorance doe suffer the law to take such holde, and enter so

far into their consciences, where it hath nothyng to do. For the conscience of a spirituall man is the seate of Christ, where there should be nothyng els but ioy, peace, comfort and consolation in the holy Ghost. And therefore the law which bringeth horror and feare hath nothyng to do with it, but vpon the flesh and old man, which is corrupted with pride & many other deceyuable lustes, and therefore requyreth a burden to be layde vpon the backe, that it may be kept vnder, and not triumph ouer the spirit & inwarde man, which should alwayes be at libertie in the loue of heauenly thyngs. Yet I saye, when contrarye to his offices which it is appointed vnto, they will place the straightnesse and seueritie therof vpon theire consciences, it must nedes be greate cause of disquyetnesse and feare diuers wayes: for it vrgeth vpon impossible duetees, it checketh for neglecting the lawe, it threatneth and curseth them for doing those thyngs which it hath forbidde. And thus y poore conscience being so much ouercharged wt sorrow and feare, because it looketh onely vpō y Actiue righteousnesse of

Righteousnes actiue in the Lawe, passiue in the Gospell.

the

the Lawe, what he hath done & what he hath left vndone, and altogether forgetteth that * Passiue righteousnesse of faith, which is begotten in them by the seede of God through the bowels of Jesus Christ, wherevnto they ought to haue theire chiefe and onely respect, to strengthen themselues withyn time of trouble. And it may be, that by reason of the greate afflictions which the minde is ouerpressed with, the seede of God be so darkened in them, that they are in doubte whether it be of his seede or not. And therefore to speake somewhat for the comforting of those which are so to be brought, admitte that in thine owne iudgement thy faith is vtterly darkened and taken out, so that thou canst not perceyue any one sparkle of it in thee, to refresh and ease thy sorrowfull minde withall: yet thinke with thy selfe, that y which hath once beene truely & vnfaynedly in thee, the same must nedes be in thee still. For it is vnpossible that our vnbeliefe, should make the faith of God to be of none effecte: for he is alwaies one & vnchaungable, howsoeuer we doe

* Passiue righteousnes, is to beleue, and to be saued by that which Christ hath suffered for vs

Rom. 3.3.

Mal. 3.6.

om.11.29. seeme to be vnto our selues. His giftes & callings, are without repentace, how so euer he dealeth with vs by afflictions in this life. Notable instruction to this purpose we haue in the 89. Psalm, where ye holy Ghost vseth these wordes: If my children forsake my Law, & walke not in my iudgment, Psalm.89.30.34 if they breake my statutes, & keepe not my commandements, then will I visite their transgressions with the rod & their iniquitie with stroaks. But my louinge kindnes will I not vtterlie take from them, nor falsifie my trueth. My couenant will I not breake, nor chaunge that which hath gone out of my lippes. Here you see then by plaine testimonies, that the most deare children of God, when so euer they do offend him, must looke for some punishment at his handes for the same; though not such as they will appoynt vnto thē selues, but rather such as he in his wisedome shal see to be conuenient & profitable for the bettering of their maners, & furtherance of their saluation. Yea and it may be, ye he will exercise or punish them wt this crosse,

euen

euen by darkninge their faith, to make them see their miserie without him, that afterwardes when strength shall come againe, they may learne to liue more warely, and become more thankfull vnto God for his mercies towards them. But in conclusion how straightly euer he doth punish them which are his, we haue the warrant from his owne mouth, who can not lye, that he will not take his mercy from them, nor falsifye his trueth. Yea and for more assurance he hath sworne the performance thereof by an oth, saying. As I haue sworne that the waters of Noah shall no more go ouer the earth, so haue I sworne that I wil no more be angrie with thee nor reproue thee, the mountaines shal remoue & the hilles shall fall downe, but my mercie shall not departe from thee, nor the couenant of my peace fall awaie. And what though wee at some time bee blinde, shall wee thinke therefore that the Lordes sight is dimmed also; and what though nowe and then wee bee weake and feeble, that we thinke or imagine therefore that

Esai. 54. 9. 10.

the Lordes strength is decayed in like sorte: far be it from vs so to say: for that were to imagine of the Lord, as of a mortal man, who iudgeth alwaies according to the present estate: and from whose eyes a thinne scumme of drosse will hide greate and pretious matter, who thinketh also that when things are hidde and darkened for a time, that they are lost & gone for euer, specially if they be such as are deare & pretious vnto them. But there is no such matter in the Lord, who doth not onely see the bottome and ground of all thinges, but also is the beginner & ender of euery thing y is done. Who at some time is prouoked through our securitie and coldnesse in prayer, to cast a thinne scumme of infidelitie vpon our faith, and darken it withall, to make vs vp to more watchfulnesse, and earnest calling vpon him. But we (alas) such is our weakenesse, do thinke by and by that all is gone and lost and wee vtterly forsaken, then we beginne to grone and crye, then wee sigh and sobbe, then we sorrow and lamente, then wee beginne to call

to

to mind our vnthankfulnes for his former mercies bestowed vpon vs. And this is ẏ fruite which ẏ Lord doth seek at our hands by thus afflicting of vs, who is so farre from taking away his seede of faith from vs, that after our earnest prayer & true acknowledgement of our selues, doeth both kindle and encrease the same, to a far greater measure then euer it was before.

These thinges being well thought vpon, may be a good mean to make vs more wise, and valiant in this spiritu-all warfare, then we haue beene heretofore: For as the ashes caste vpon the fire, put it not out, but is a meane to preserue the same in the nighte against morninge, which otherwise would be consumed. And as the barrennes of the trees in winter, are a meane to preserue the roote against sommer, which then will ascende vp his iuice into the bodye and branches therof, whereby they are greatly inlarged, and made farre more fruitefull then euer they were before: euen so are afflictions vnto ẏ children of God, which doe not onely keepe them from

the

the barrennes of sin, but also increase and multiplie them in the fire & fruitfulnes of Gods holy spirite, as the Apostle witnesseth unto the Romanes: Tribulation bringeth patience, patience experience, experience hope, & hope maketh not ashamed. Now be it there is no crosse pleasant for the present time but very tedious & bitter, as it appeareth very plentifully in the booke of Job, & in the Psalmes, where there is set downe unto us, euē a platforme of the estate of the Churche being under the crosse, who poure out beaute and grieuous complaintes, in cursing the day and houre of birthe, in accusing the Lord of iniustice, and in calling into doubt whether he would any more mercy or not. Whereby we may euidentlye perceaue, how burdenous afflictions are unto us whilest they are present, specially if they bee such crosses as these holye men were exercised with many times: which very often had all spirituall strength and comfort so darkened in them, y they could not perceiue one sparke remaining to reneue themselues with al, but

Rom.5.3.4.

Iob.3.3.

Psal.77.7.8.

were

were faine to flye vnto ẏ former mercies of God, which they were woonte to finde at his hande, or vnto his goodnesse shewed vnto their fathers: Because their tentations were such, as did make them obliuions of his former mercies towardes themselues: being surelye perswaded, that as they being in like distresses, called vpon him, and were defyuered, so in like maner he would bee no lesse mercifull vnto them, although their hope were euen against hope.

But in conclusion howe bitter so euer their, or our afflictions were, or are, for the present time, yet the ende thereof alwayes bringeth with it, an infallible wayght of glorie, as wee cleerelye see, by the ende which the Lorde made with Job. Which S. James (exhortinge vnto patience) willeth vs to consider of. Iob.42. Iam.5.11.

And by the testimonye of Dauid also, who after his afflictions nowe ouerpassed, and hee feelinge the commoditie which they broughte vnto him, bursteth out into these wordes:

Be-

Psal.119.67.68. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but nowe I keepe thy worde. And again, It is good for me that I haue beene afflicted, that I might learne thy statutes. Sée then here you see that the Prophet confesseth that affliction was the meane whereby he was not onelye procured to knowe the worde, but also to keepe it. The wiseman in like sort considering the great commodities which affliction bringeth vnto the church of God, telleth vs plainely, that his strength is small which faileth in the day of aduersitie. But yet for all that let the commoditie thereof be as great as it shall, it behoueth vs not to vse any meanes whereby to multiplie and increase the same vpon our selues, but rather all lawfull and godly meanes that wee can to preuente it. And amongst al y rest this may be one, & the chiefest, what afflictions soeuer we suffer in body or otherwise, to beare them with patience, and not permitte the lawe for any thing after it hath beaten downe the pride of our flesh, to take holde vpon our consciences. For this is the chiefest matter that my pur-

pose

pose was in this place to handle, how be it I haue taken occasion by ẏ way, to speake somewhat for the comforte and instruction of those weake ones, who (although they haue the seede of God in them) doe oftetimes so farre ouershoote them selues this way, by lettinge the Lawe to take such deepe holde vpon their consciences, that all hope of comforte doth seeme to be perished in them. And as for the reste which are without, I leaue them as those to whome these comfortes do not yet belong, vntil such time as the lawe hath thus humbled them also. And thus much for the seconde abusers of the Lawe, namelye for those that doe dispaire.

It remayneth now that I speake somewhat of the meanes, whereby we may auoyde these abuses, which is to come vnto Christ, and that, as I haue before shewed, is the last office of the Lawe. For the Lawe hauing passed vpon vs, by these rules before repeated, it is now appointed for vs to come vnto Christ, and not presume in the pride of our heartes against the Lawe

of

of our owne members to the fulfilling of it: neither yet faint by the way, because we are not able to doe ẏ same, but come vnto Christ who is the fulfiller therof for vs. And ẏ steps wherby we come vnto him are these: Faith and Repentance. For in the framing of a Christian man, faith hath the first place, as it is manifeste in the Epistle to the Romanes: How shall they call vpon him in whome they haue not beleeued.

[illegible]ith and re-[illegible]entance, steps [illegible] Christ.

Rom. 10.

But because I haue spoken somewhat already of the rote and foundation of faith, I will nowe begin at repentance, and so proceede more cleerely vnto ẏ iustifyinge faith which bringeth with it the peace of conscience: for true repentance stretcheth further thē a hatred of sinne and feare of Gods iudgements, (which hath beene somewhat touched alreadie.) For there is conteyned in it also the loue of vertue, with a hope of his mercies. For so much doth the Prophet Ezechiel comprehend in describing of ẏ same, where he hath these wordes: If a wicked man will returne from all his sinnes

Ezech 18. 21
Osee. 14 1

that

that he hath committed, and keepe all my statutes, and doe that which is lawfull and right, hee shall surelie liue and not die.

Ose 6.8. Esay 55.6. Ioel. 2.12.

This is the generall description, which the Scripture very plentifullie giueth foorth of repentance, namelye: A turninge from our owne wayes which is sin, into the waies of God, which the Prophet calleth his statutes: for they alone are lawfull and right in his sight, and to those only which walk therein, he hath ioyned this promise of life. Hereby you see then how needefull a thing this doctrine is vnto euery Christian man, for wee can haue no assurance of life from the Lorde, vnto our owne consciences, except we doe warrante it vnto our selues also, by this carefull practise and indeuoure to strive and fight continuallye againste our owne wayes, that thereby wee may become more tractable euery day then other in the wayes of God.

And as for the reste, which haue no care this waye, but rather haue their delightes and actions carryed alway headlong into all fleshly pleasures.

Let

Let them pretende what they can, and bragge so much of their knowledge as they like, yet for all that, they stand in the state of death, and can haue no hope of life in them, before such time as they make this carefull indenture vnto godlinesse, by renouncing of their owne corruptions, to be the fruite of it. For what other thing then this doth the holy Ghost meane when he willeth vs to make our election or calling by good workes. But as the assurance therof lay in our selues, neyther yet that we should think the Lorde to be subiect vnto change: but rather that we may knowe this to bee the will of God, euen our sanctification that vvee should abstaine from fornication, and that euerie man might knowe how to possesse his vessell in holinesse, and not in the lustes of concupiscence and sinne as those Gentiles vvhich knowe not God.

2. Pet. 1. 10.

1. Thes. 4. 3.

So; to this ende doeth the Lorde bestowe his graces vpon vs, that wee might learne to denie vngodlinesse and vvorldlie lustes, and become holie as he him selfe is holie. Yea

Tit. 2. 11. 12.

and

& the scripture doth binde a marueielous necessitie vnto the same, vvhere the holie Ghost hath these vvordes. If ye be risen vvith Christ, seeke those things vvhich are aboue vvhere Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. And set not your affections on earthlie things. And againe, If vve call him Father, who without respecte of persons iudgeeth euery mans worke, let vs spende ẏ time of our being here in feare. And againe, worke out your saluation with trembling and feare; so that hereby it is plaine that we are not come to the end of our race, when we haue gotten a litle vnderstanding and knowledge of the scriptures and how to apply the same: for that is but to knowe what weapons we must vse in this spirituall warfare, and how to handle ẏ same for our owne defence; neyther when we are come to the sight & mistykings of our sinnes and corruptions wherein we do displease ẏ Lorde: for ẏ is no other also then to be brought out into ẏ fielde in the sight of our enemies, ẏ deuil, ẏ world, & the flesh, against whom

Col.3.1.2.

1.Pet.1.17.

Philip.2.12.

we must fight & vse these weapons for ẏ ouerthrow of thē, lest they preuaile, against vs, and make vs more secure in sinne then euer we were before. So that the greatest & most daungerouse parte of our spirituall warfare is as yet vnaccomplished: that is the subduing & ouerthrowe of these enemies. The first & chiefest of them which we must set vpon, and seeke to subdue, is our owne flesh, which if that be once mastered: the other two are but scarre crowes, and can neuer be able to do vs any greate harme. Know you not that one secrete & vnknowne enemye in a besieged citie is more hurtful then a hundred knowne enemies without the same? But if this secrete enemie which is within bee once knowne and subdued (nay although theire bee many of them) yet as long as they bee kept vnder bōds they can not be hurtful at al, & theire hope also greatly decayed which are wont. The deuil, the world, are enemies wout, and can not possibly preuaile any whit wt vs, vntil such time as they get some lyking and entertainemēt of our affections, which

if

ſe they do: certainely there is like to be a greate ſpoile & the whole man to bee brought into vtter ruine, vnleſſe there be a ſhort returne, & theſe affections of ours quickly called home againe vnder ſubiection of ỳ ſpirit. Surely a matter wherein the deare children of God oft times do very far forget and ouerſhoot themſelues. And therefore this is good counſel vnto thoſe which haue ſtrẽgth to receyue it, ỳ as often as our affectiõs do beginne to ſtray out after ỳ deſire & loue of worldly things or fleſhly cõcupiſcẽces any kind of way: ſo often to ſuſpect our ſelues of ſome daunger towards, & eſteeme of thẽ, as of our home enemies, which now beginne to come in league with thoſe which are without, namely the worlde and the deuil, thereby to worke ſome treaſon againſt vs. And therefore to make all poſſible ſpeede that we can to cut ſhort and reſtraine them, leſt in the ende through theare ſugred entycementes, they beget both the will and minde to conſent alſo. This is ỳ cauſe why the ſcripture is ſo plentifull and earneſt in commending vnto vs the doctrine

of mortification as a chiefe fruite of our repentance & telleth vs plainely, y if we will be Christes, we must crucify the flesh with the affections & lustes thereof, that is, we must dayly and continually striue and fight against our handes, and heart, worde, & thought, that they may be crucified & killed frō all vnrighteousnesse: As pride, couetousnesse, deceipt, blasphemie, or any other vngodlinesse, that the contraries vertues, as humilitie, liberalitie, innocencie, or whatsoeuer is of pietie, may liue and growe in vs. For before we haue some striuing in our selues to flea those vices, it is vnpossible that we should haue any feeling of these other vertues: for as we do conceaue a misliking of the one, so we shal receyue a loue and lyking towardes the other: they can not both liue together in vs. This much doth the Apostle giue vs to vnderstand where he hath these wordes: Knowe you not that to whō so euer you giue your selues as seruantes to obeie, his seruantes you are to whom you obeie, whether it be of sinne vnto death, or of obedi-

Rom. 6. 16. 20.

ence

unto vnto righteousnesse. So that whilest we are the seruants of sinne, we haue no part nor portion in righteousnesse, no more then death hath with life, or hell with heauen. Well then, seing ỳ case standeth so, let vs bewise in chusing vnto our selues ỳ better part, which is obedience vnto righteousnes, that we may become the seruantes & sonnes of God. And although it be a crowne which can not be had without greate and tedious striuing, yet let vs knowe that it is worthie of all the labour that we shall or can bestowe vpon it: the end wil bringe recompence ten thousand folde, as the Apostle witnesseth. The afflictiõs of this life are not vvorthie of the glorie that shal be shevved vnto vs. And therefore let vs play the valiant souldiers, fight, striue, kill, crucify, & condemne, whatsoeuer in vs may be anie hinderance thereunto, yea although it bee as deare vnto vs as our eie or hande, yet vve must pull it out and cast it off, for better it is to goe into life hault, maimed, or blinde, then into eternall fire having al our members.

Rom. 8. 18.

Matt. 5.

In which wordes our Saulour Christ teacheth vs to vse vyolence euen against our owne nature: for the kingdome of Gods sake. Not in cutting of the members of our bodies, but in rooting out the affections of the mind, how deare so euer they are vnto vs, vpon whome these affections do rest. Whether it bee Father, or Mother, wife, or children, yet if the loue of them bee any let vnto vs in the ways of life, pull them out, cutte them off, and cast them awaye, so that if it stande vs vpon to cast away those affections out of our heartes, which haue so great shewe of good in them, and are both commaunded and commended in scripture, for the loue of Gods kingdome: Howe much more then behoueth it vs, to roote out those priuate affections, which are not onely free from any shewe of good: but also bring greate euills and vncredible incõueniences with them, & are straightly forbidden in the worde of God. As adulterie, fornication, vncleanenesse, vnnaturall lustes, euill concupiscence, couetousnesse, deceipte,

Collo. 35.

ceipte, lieing, swearing, cursed speaking, and such like. For if those former good affectiõs may at some time, be a hinderance vnto vs in the waye of life: much more these euilles at all times, and therefore not to be suffered at any time, nor in any person, if they will norish any hope of saluation in them selues. For they are no other, the the very whelpes of Babilon, which we are charged to destroy and breake theire bones in peeces while they are yonge, lest through theire longe continuance, they growe to such strength, and take so sure holde vpon vs, ẏ wee become slaues vnto them. Let vs looke vnto it, therefore, and roote them out, as soone as any motion thereof doth appeare in vs. Good admonitiõ to this purpose we haue in the Epistle to the Ephesians. Be angrie and sinne not, let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath. And again in ẏ 4 Psalm: Tremble and sinne not, examine thine owne hearte vpon thy bedde and be still. That is, we should striue with our heartes euen in our secrete chambers vpõ our bed against sin ẏ it

Psal. 137. 9.

Ephe. 4. 26.

sleepe not, nor haue any continuance with vs, for feare of the discommodities that may come thereby. True it is, that sinne will be in vs so longe as we doe remaine in this body: but let vs take heede that it do not raigne and beare rule in vs, otherwise then a con-
Rom.6.12 demned wretch, which hath already
Rom.2.3. receyued the sentence of death. And
Gen.3.15 let vs giue it such welcome, as the seed of the serpent with whom we must be at continuall enmitie and striffe. And all be it the case stand so with vs, that we are not onely guilty in the affection, but also drowned in the action of euery sinne that can bee named: yet let vs knowe for our comforte, that true repentance is of strength to purge them all away and make vs pure in the sight of God. As it is witnessed in the fourth of Esay, where the Lord maketh this promise vnto the people vpon the condition of repentance: Though your sinnes were as crimson, they shall bee made white as snowe, and though they were redde as scarlate, they shall be made like wolle.

And therefore if the Lorde at any time in mercie, shal reueile or make knowen vnto any man, all the sinnes that hee hath committed, throughout his whole life: yet there is no cause why we should dispaire, how great & grieuous so euer they be. For the Lord in opening of them hath no such meaning in him, but rather thereby doth draw vs to a consideratiō of our inordinate steppes, how farre we haue strayed aside from him, and doth moue vs also by that meane to looke into the word of God, which is a lanthorne vnto our feet, & a light vnto our pathes: Psal. 119.105.
that thereby we may see how to turne againe into the right way, and what dueties there are required of vs, for the purginge and cleansinge away of these greate sinnes. There may the theefe which hath stoalne, learne to Ephes.4.28.
steale no more, but laboure truelie with his owne handes in some lawfull vocation, that he may be able to minister vnto the necessitie of others. There may the deceitfull perfured person, learne to restore home his euill gotten goodes, and take a more

more righteous course afterwardes.
2.Cor.7.2. Where may the fornicators, and adulterers, learne to leaue off their vncleanesse, and content them selues euery man with his owne wife, and euery woman with her owne husbande.
Leuit 24. 15.16. Where may the blasphemous swearer
1.Tim 6.7.8 learne to feare an oath, and tremble at the maiestie of God; and the greedye couetous person, to contente himselfe with foode and rayment, because hee
Gen 3 19. brought nothing into this worlde, and shall carrie as little out. There may the proude person learne to bee humble, because he is made of duste, and to duste shall returne.
Psal 119.9. And to conclude, there may euerie sinner, learne to redresse his mor-
Phil.3.8. dinate wayes, and to esteeme of all the pleasures and profites of this life as dounge, in respecte of Christ. For this is the fruite which the Lorde by reuelinge our sinnes, doeth looke for at our handes, and this change is requyred in euerie one of vs, be-
Iohn.3 3. fore wee can truelye be turned vnto him, in so much as it is the fruite of our secõd birth, without the which no man can see the kingdome of God.

God. Therfore it standeth vs vpon, so much the more earnestly to practise this change in our selues, that wee may euery day be renued vnto a more perfitte shape then other: For true and vnfayned repentance is nothinge els, then a continuall striuing to better our manners. And to this ende are all those spirituall exercises appointed by the holy Ghost in the church of Christ, as prayer, preachyng, prayses, sacramentes, with such like. If therefore our mindes in frequentinge of them, be not to profite this way: I see not how wee shall profite our selues at all, yea although we frequent them very often.

May we not read for warrant hereof, very plentifully in the olde Testament, howe that the Lorde did euen loath their Sacrifices, and other spirituall exercyses commaunded in the Lawe for the seruice of God: when men are holden in them, without any conscience of sinne, or carefull practise vnto newenes of life, whereunto chiefly they were ordeyned, as sayeth the Lorde by his Prophet.

Bring

Esay.1.33. Bring no more oblations in vaine; Incense is abhomination vnto me, I cannot suffer your nevve moones nor Sabbaoth daies, it is iniquitie: nor solemne assemblies, my soule hateth your nevve moones, & your appointed feastes, they are a burdē vnto me, I am vvearie to beare thē; When you stretch foorth your hands I vvil hide mine eies from you, and though you make manie praiers, I vvill not heare you. And againe in another place: Take avvaie from me the multitude of your songes, I can not abide the melodie of the vials. And againe. Hee that killeth a Bullock, is as he that slevve a man, and he that sacrificeth a sheepe, is as if he cut off a dogges necke, hee that offreth an oblation, as if hee offred svvines blood, and he that remembreth incense, as if he sanctified an Idole.

Amos 5.23.

Esay.56.3.

And why doth the Lorde thus abhorre those thinges, which otherwise he hath commanded? The causes are set downe also, which be these: the neglecte of iudgement, wante of mercy towards

wards their brethren, for so saith the holy Ghost: Their handes are full of blood; & the preferring of their owne wayes, which is sinne, wherein they did set their whole delight, before the wayes of God. They thought that the bare vse of these outward ceremonies or shadowes, was so much as ỹ Lord did require, or lake for at their hands, supposing him to be affectionated like vnto a common strumpet, who alwayes loketh vnto the gifte, & neuer respecteth the minde or qualities of the giuer. They had forgotten that the Lorde vvill haue mercie and not sacrifice: and therefore made no conscyence in falsifying their weight, & making their measure small, and price great, that they might bie the pore for siluer, & the needie for shovves. Yea and in the time of theire newe moones, & sabaothes also, they thought euery day to be ten, till these feastes were ouerpassed, that they might bee at whome agame, to vtter their refuse corne: thinking all ỹ time lost which was spent in the seruice of God, preferring euẽ the basest of their odde reckonings

Esay. 1

Ose. 6. 6.

Amos. 8. 5. 6.

koninges, that made any thinge for their priuate profit, before it. And this was the cause why the Lord did abhorre their sacrifices, which otherwise he both commanded and commended. But we may speake much more profitablie of this in applyinge the same vnto our time: for were not their sacrifices in that time of the lawe, as precious in the sight of God, as our sacramentes are nowe vnder the Gospell? And are not our sinnes also of this age, as monstruous as euer were theirs? And what is behinde then, that thos our seales of Baptisme and the Lordes Supper, which wee make so much accounte of, and so smotherye shrowde our selues vnder, should not be as loathsome in the eyes of God, as euer were theirs at that time? Surely I can perceiue no reason to the contrary, so long as wee are holden in them, without remorse of sinne, or care vnto newnesse of life, whereunto they were appeynted. For thes outwarde seales are so farre forth profitable vnto vs, as we are partakers of thos spirituall graces which are figured

fed vnder them in Baptisme. Therefore we haue to consider our free forgiuenesse of sinnes, washed away in the bloud of Christ, that as Christ died and was buried for our sinnes, so wee also shoulde die vnto sinne, that it haue no more rule in our mortall bodies. And as Christ is ryssen againe frō the dead, death hauing no more dominion ouer him: so wee should after liue in newnesse of life, offering vp vnto God our bodies and soules which he hath purchased and redeemed vnto him selfe. The Lordes Supper also is a meane to refresh and renue our dull memories in these so greate mercyes and benefites bestowed vpon vs in Christ, that euerye daye wee may become more thankefull then other for the same. These considerations or profitinges in the obseruation of the Sacramentes beeinge layde aside, there remayneth not one sparke of Religion or holynesse in them, as the holye Prophet Dauid moste plainelye proueth vnto vs out of the fiftie Psalme, where hee saith: Rom. 6

I will

Psal.50.8, I vvill not reprooue thee for thy sacrifices and burnt offerings vvhich haue not beene continued before me, saith the Lord. I vvill not take a bullock out of thy house, or goates out of thy folde, the vvhole vvorlde is mine and all that therein is. But what followeth? Offer to god praise and paie thy vovves vnto the moste highest. Los these are the dueties which the Lorde doeth chiefly loke for at our handes: for by offring of praise is meant no other thing then a continuall thankfull remembrance of the great benefites bestowed vpon vs in Christ, which the Lordes supper doeth liuelie represent vnto vs, as I haue before shewed, by paying or performing our vowes.

The Lordes Supper.

Baptisme

Wee are taught also manfullye to fight vnder ỳ banner of Christ, against the deuill, the worlde, and our owne flesh, whereunto we haue bound our selues vnder the seale of baptisme, as by a solemne oath made in our behalfe by two or three witnesses. These I say are the thinges which wee must haue our chiefe respecte vnto, in the partaking

king of those outwarde elementes, or els they can bringe no profit vnto vs, there is no religion in them, and therfore so lothsome vnto the Lord that in no wise he can digest the same, but is ready euen to belche against it: yea & it shalbe saide vnto those in the ende which do frequent them in this sorte, Who hath required these things at your handes? Esa. 1.12.

Surely the knowledge of this, can not but be very profitable for our time, if wee would let it take some rote in our heartes. For who seeth not that the most parte of men are caried away with a blinde perswasion of religion & holinesse, which they themselues doo thinke to be truely in them, because they doe resorte vnto the outward ceremonies commaunded in the word, and although all those duties, wherefore these spirituall exercises are ordeyned, be cleane shut out of theire lyues they make no conscience of it at all, but without blushing will set an impudēt face vpon it ỹ they are as good christians as any can be, although theire liues do testifie vnto the whole world

that there is not one sparke of true and vnfayned christianitie in them. Well, I can thinke more of this, then nowe my leasure will serue to condemne at large. Yet thus much may I say, that Christ can haue no enterance into vs, nor we any way vnto him, except the path be first prepared by repentance, by an vnfayned acknowledginge of our sinnes, with earnest stryuinge to better our conuersation. Shut vp thy hearte from these things, and thou dost so much as in thee lyeth, to wall thy selfe about with brasse, that Christ by his spirit may haue no enterance into thee, and prouokest him in like sort, so to hedge vp his mercies and graces from thy soule, that thou shalt neuer haue any parte in them. Howe miserable then will thy case be, for hauing once shut out thy selfe from Christ, the way to heauen also, is shutte vp from thee, hell gapeth with open mouth, ready to receyue thee, and ỳ deuiles waite with great diligence to carry thy soule into ỳ euerlastinge tormentes thereof. Looke vnto it therefore, and let vs be wise: for if the entertainement of

Christ

Christ, will bee a meane to set vs free from all these miseries: what greate diligence ought we to vse in preparinge a way for him, that he may haue free passage vnto vs. Certaine it is that before he can come, the way must bee prepared, and there is noe other meane to prepare the same, but by repentance. For our barraine heartes are that very desart which ẏ Prophet Esay speaketh of, where the Lordes way must be prepared before his comming, by filling vp euery lowe valley, and daungerouse hoale, which is our ignorance and infidelitie, that must be filled vp with the true knowledge of God: by beating downe euery high mountaine, that is our pride and arrogancie, which must be beaten vpon with the mattocke of Gods iudgements, till such time as wee be humbled and brought lowe in our owne eyes: by making euery crooked path straight, which is the crooked inuentions of mans braine, contrarie to the will of God, which must bee made straight & plaine by ẏ light of his word: Esai. 40. 3. 4.

and the rough waies playne, by rough waies is meant, not onely stubbornesse and obstinacie, but also all other sinnes and vices whatsoeuer. Which may bee verie well compared vnto stones and stumbling blockes, which are as hinderances in the Lords way, that he can not haue free passage vnto vs, vntill such time, as the delight & will vnto them, be cleane pared and swept away out of our heartes. The forerunner, which was sent to prepare this way, was Iohn Baptist, and the onely meane which he vsed to prepare the same, was by preachinge repen-

Mat. 3. 1. 3. tance, Repent for the kingdome of God is at hand This was the generall doctrine which he preached for the accomplishing of this worke, not vnto one sorte of people, but vnto all that euer came vnto him. And in token of the necessitie therof, he would receyue none vnto his baptisme, before they

Mar. 1. 4 had made open confession of all theire sinnes, ensigne that as a chiefe meane whereby their own consciences might witnesse vnto them selues, how we needfully it was requyred in euery one to repent.

repent, seeinge theire owne mouthes did confesse such matter to be in them, as is worthie of repentance. Furthermore whē any came vnto him, whom he perceyued by some inwarde motiō, or outward token, not to haue theire heartes aright as the malitious Pharises, and Sadduces, he manassed them sharpely with the iudgmentes of God, calling them a Generation of vipers, Mat.3.7.8. Chargynge them straightly to bringe forth the fruit worthy of amendment of life, before they could be fitte to receyue that seale of the newe couenant. And after Iohn was beheaded, our Sauiour Christ also continued this doctrine of repentāce vnto the Iewes, saying. Amende your liues for the kingdome of God is at hand. And againe, The time is fulfilled, the kingdome of God is at hand, repēt & beleue the Gospel. For this cause he came into ỹ worlde not to call righteous, but sinners to repētance: which precept belongeth not onely vnto the Iewes, but we Gētiles also are vnder ỹ same condition in like sorte, as it is witnessed in ỹ Actes. God hath giuē Act.11.18.

Mat.4.17.

Mar.1.15.

Mat.9.13.

vnto the Gentiles, repentance vnto life also. True it is, that it had his beginning at the Jewes, and so from thē vnto vs Gentils: for to this end Christ dyed, was buried and rose againe: that repentance & remission of sinnes, might be preached vnto all natiōs, beginning at Ierusalem. So then hereby it is plaine, that as there is noe other meane to prepare ẏ Lords way but by repentance: so in like sorte this office of preparing, belongeth not vnto John and our sauiour Christ alone, but vnto all the Apostles and ministers of God, euen to the worldes end. Neyther is it a duetie ẏ is simply requyred of the Jewes thus to be prepared: but we Gentils also (as many as wil giue any entertainemēt vnto ẏ Lord) must put our neckes vnder ẏ yoke, and submit our selues vnto the same order of discipline in the bettering of our manners, before our earthly tabernacles can fitly be prepared, to receyue him. Saint Paule who was appoynted of ẏ Lord as a chiefe minister for ẏ conuersion of ẏ Gentiles, who also was so carefull in his office, that he laboured

uke 24.46. 7. verses.

.20.20.21. verses.

red night & day euen with teares, for the conuersion of thē, teaching openly and in euey house, the repē-tance towards God, & the faith towards our Lord Iesus Christ. The same S. Paul (I say) telleth vs plainly ỳ they which haue beleued God, must be careful to shew forth good workes, charging Titus his sone as touching the new birth, who was thē minister of Creta, ỳ he should earnestly exhort his auditory vnto ỳ same, for this saith he is good & profitable vnto all men, high & low, rich & poore, bond & free, euery one that beleueth in Christ this must be ỳ fruit of it: a care to shew forth good workes, circūspection of life towards them ỳ doe not yet beleue, & a shamefastnes for our former negligēce. S. James compareth ỳ faith which is without these effectes, vnto a body wout a spirit: which in ỳ eyes of man is not onely deade, but also very lothsome & noysome. Euē so is our faith ỳ is voyd of good workes in ỳ eyes of God, as our sauiour Christ maketh it plain to vs by cursing ỳ fig tree because it was fruitlesse. By casting ỳ wicked

Titus. 3. 8 9.

Titus. 1. 4.

Iames. 2. 26

Mar. 11. 14

Mat.22.12. guest into vtter darkenesse, because he presumed vnto the mariage without
Mat.25.3.12. a wedding garment. And by reiectinge those foolish virgines, because they had no oyle in theire lampes. Which examples, doe very well shew vnto vs, that faith and workes must goe together, how: be it not in the matter of iustification before God, yet in our conuersation before men, or els neither of both can be accepted. For as these foolish virgines could not be receyued for theire emptie Lampes, nor the fruitlesse tree, spared for his leaues, nor yet the wicked guest accompted of, for his resorting vnto the heauenly banquet, seing he wanted his mariage garment: euen so we in like sorte shalbe as litle accompted of, for our outward knowledge and profession, so longe as the same is without those effects & fruites, that belonge vnto true repentance. For whilest our religion or christianitie standeth in a bare profession, what are wee anie better then emptie Lampes without oyle, trees bearinge leaues, but noe fruite, wicked guestes which eyther for custome

or company resorte often vnto the Lordes table, but neuer put on the wedding garment. And therfore whē the Lord shal come to vs his guestes, alas what shal then become of vs but cursednes, & reiection into vter darcknesse, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. I will not say but that now for a time we may haue a name that we liue, but then it shall be founde out that we are dead: it may seeme nowe vnto mē that we heare somewhat, but then shall be taken from vs, euen that which in trueth, we neuer had. Knowe you not what is written, There is no thing couered that shal not bee reueiled, neither hid that shall not be made knowen. Let vs not therefore anye longer, so securelye satisfie our selues in the shadowe of Christianitie, when the true substance is away, for if a bare outwards professiō may stand for payment before the Lord, why thē shoulde not the deuils be iustifyed as well as we, for they professe openlye that Iesus is the Sonne of God: May saint James saith more, that the deuils doe beleeue and tremble. But

Mat. 22. 11.

Luke. 12. 2.

Iames. 2. 19.

there

there are a great manye of vs which doe make much boast of our faith, and yet neuer tremble, neither at our own sinnes, nor at the iudgements of God: and therfore if the deuils were not alredy condemned, it might well be said of them, that they are nearer vnto saluatiō then a great many of our mouth Gospellers in these dayes. Surely it is strange, that the Gospell (being of such excellencie and power as it is, and we pretending so great knowledge of the same as we doe) shoulde gaine so little fruite at our handes. Wee may see by plentifull testimonie of Scripture, how wōderfullie the knowledge thereof hath wrought in the hearts of Gods children heretofore, and what great duties it hath perswaded them to passe ouer, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakednesse, in watchings and fastinges, in greate weakenesse, longe prayer, and tedious trauels and persecutions diuers wayes: Some wandring vp and downe in wildernes, cloathed in Sheepes skinnes, and Goates skinnes, hauing their abode in deames and caues of the earth, to

2. Cor. 6. 6.

2 Cor. 11. 24. 25. Hebr. 11. 37. 38.

declare

declare that the Lord was their portion, and that they had no kingdome in this life, & therfore bade the worlde adue, which was not worthie of them. Others also of Gods children, whom he preferred to great riches & honour, lived in the possession thereof, as if nothing of the same belonged priuatelie vnto themselues. And therefore ofte times resigned ouer euen their owne right to buy peace: vsing this world as though they had had no inheritance therein, confessing their estate here to be no other but as pilgrimes & strangers, and therefore esteemed all things in this world as dongue, in respecte of that heauenly comfort which was laid vp for them in Christ Jesus. All these things we know, & can talke very plentifullie of them when we come in companie of those that doe fauour religion. We cã tell of Joseph how he preferred ỹ dungeõ and Irons which did pearce his soule, before the libertie & glory of Potyphers house: & of Moyses, how he forsoke to be called ỹ sõne of Pharaos daughter, and chose rather to suffer afflictions wt the people of God, then to enioy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Psal. 119. 57.

Gen. 13. 9.

Gen. 47. 9.

Phil. 3. 8.

Gen. 39. 20.

Heb. 11. 24. 25. 26.

We

Wee can tell also of Dauid how hee
made his choyse, rather to bee made a
Psal 84.10. doore keeper in the Lordes house, then
to be head ruler in the guided pallaces
of wicked Princes. And of the Apo-
stles in like sorte, how theire cheefest
glorie in this life, was to suffer affliti-
Act.5.40.41. ons for the name of Christ, all this is
most true, and these great effectes and
fruite hath faith gayned at their hands
as the holy Ghost witnesseth vnto the
Hebr.11. Hebrewes. And howe shall we think
then that we haue the same faith, whē
we are not onely voyd of these vertues
but also haue placed in the roome of e-
uery of them, a vice repugnant there-
vnto. Well I must conclude that our
faith is fayned, and we greatly blinded
to thinke that the holye Ghost is be-
come so careles of his owne glory now
in these last dayes, & especially where
the Gospell is so plentifully preached.
Nay looke further and we shall finde
out a more grosser blindnesse then all
this: for are we not oftentimes forced
to pronounce sentence of condemna-
tion vpon our owne soules, and wee
perceiue it not? Doe we not say daylie

that

that the Lord will not hold him guilt- Exod. 20.7.
lesse that taketh his name in vain, and yet without any remorse, we tosse the same in our mouthes, like a tennisse ball, about euery trifling toye, beside also our vayne abusing of his worde, and neglecte of duetie therein, which often in the Scripture is taken for his name. Againe, are we not readye al- Leuit. 22. 31.
wayes with the congregation, to beg forgiuenes conditionally of the Lord, as we forgiue others? Yet wee will Mat. 6. 12.
forgiue none, but are moued with e-
uery fleabyting, to seeke reuenge to the vttermost, and therfore doe no o-
ther then craue that the iudgementes and vengeance of God may seuerelye be executed vpon vs. But we see not this, & therfore proceede on forwardes in our sinnes, as the horse rusheth vn-
to the battell, and neuer respecteth the Ierem. 8. 6.
great dãgers that are before his eyes.

Furthermore doe wee not all wil-
lingly yeald vnto this, that these are ỹ last dayes, and that there is no signe vnaccomplished, which our Sauiour Christ hath foreshewed to bee before his comming, so that nowe not onelye

the

the bodies, but also the very fruite it selfe doth appeare, to declare that summer is already come, that the regions are euen now white vnto haruest, yea and that the sickle is alredy thrust into the earth, as we may clerely see by the generall shaking thereof, so that there is nothing els to be looked for, but the appearing of the sonne of man in the cloudes, the voyce of the Archangell, and the sounde of the trumpe of God, arise you dead and come to iudgemēt, All these thinges I say, wee doe with an outwarde willingnes yeald vnto, because the trueth thereof is so manifest, that it can by no meanes be denied: and what is the cause then, that all these euidēt tokens of the final iudgement which is so neer at hand, wil not awake vs out of our deepe sleepe in sinne, vnto repentance and newenesse of life, that we may be readilie prepared for the Bridegrome. Surely an euill heart hath deceiued vs: for we say in our selues, that the Lord wil deferre his comming, & therfore take boldnes to deal more roughly wō our fellowseruants. But alas, this blinde perswasi-

Iohn.4.35. Reuel.14. 18.19.

Mat.24. 30.31.

Mat.25.6. Hebr.3.12. Luke.12.45.

on

on of lightning ỳ dayes cannot stand: for the holy ghost saith expressye, that for the electes sake those dayes shal be shortened, which is an item that might strike a greate feare into our heartes, if a spirite of slumber had not ouerwhelmed vs: but I see no other then ỳ the saying of the Prophet Esay is fulfilled vpon our english natiõ, by seeing they shal ses & not perceiue, & hearing they shal hear & not vnderstand, lest they should conuert & I should heale them. For if it were not so, how were it possible for vs to condemne & cast behinde our heeles so many louing admonitions, so many beseechings and prayings, euen by the mercifulnes of God, and in Christes behalfe, that we will be reconcyled vnto him? So many fatherly warnings which the holy Ghost doeth vse in perswading vs vnto watchfulnesse, that we may be saued, sometime by ỳ certaintie of the day, that it shall come, and the terriblenesse thereof when it commeth, as Sainte Luke paynteth it out.

Mat.24.22.

Esay.29.10.
Esay.6.9.10.

Rom.12.1.
2.Cor.5.20.

There shal be trouble & perplexitie amongst Luke.21.25.26

amongst nations, the sea and the waters shall roze, and mens hearts shall faile them foz feare, and foz looking after those thinges that shall come vpon the earth, sometime by the suddennesse of it, euen as the lightning shineth out of the East, and goeth vnto the West, so shall the comming of the Sonne of man be. And sometime by the vncertaintie of the houre, whether at euening, oz at midnight, at the cock crowing, oz in the dawning, least if he come suddenly, should finde you sleeping. Sometime also by the vigilantnesse & crueltie of our enemie the deuill, who goeth about like a deuouring and roring Lyon, continually seeking whom he may deuoure. But how little account wee make of all these fatherlye warnings and admonitions, all those which haue eyes to see, may see it, and let all them that haue heartes of flesh lament and mourne foz the same, that they may be spared from the euill day, & not perish with the careles wozlde, but especially with our owne Lande, with whome it cannot be, but that the Lozd hath a great controuersie, vnles

Mat. 24. 27.

Mark. 13. 35.

1. Pet. 5. 8.

Eze. 36. 26. and 9. 4.

wee

we should thinke that the most high-
est doth speake wordes in vayne? nay Esai.45.19.
he saith not in vaine vnto the seede of
Jacob, seeke ye me, it is not for nought
that the Lord hath continued ỹ preach-
inge of his worde amongst our
nation this many yeares, rysinge vp
early, & late, to send Prophets, Pres- Iere.7.13.
thets, and wise men vnto vs, who
haue pyped very swestely, and mour- Mat.11.17.
ned very lamentably vnto vs. And
therefore if we will not daunce at their
mirth, nor weepe at theire mourning:
that is, if we wil not reioyce at ỹ great
mercies and sweet promisses of God,
which he offereth vnto vs by them,
nor tremble and feare at the mournful
songe of his heauie plagues and iudge-
ments which he thundereth out against
vs by theire mouthes; In like sort if
we will needes harden our hearts like
an Adamant stone, & stop our eares Zac.7.11,12.
so that out the graces of God frō our
soules which he so plentifully offereth
vnto vs: yet let vs knowe, that a Pro-
phet hath bene amōgst vs, and ỹ grace
& mercy by the preaching of ỹ Gospell
hath bene generally preserued vnto

our Lande that thereby we may bee
cleane without excuse, and our bloode
iustly vpon our owne heades. For
they bee worthie of stripes for theire
ignorance which neuer sawe any light
of knowledge: howe much more wor-
thye are they of punishment, who
through longe continuance of the true
light shyninge amongst them, haue al-
most forgotten what darknesse mea-
neth, if they take not the benefit of
it, but remaine still vnfruitfull, and
vnthankfull for the same. Surely
this is the estate of our nation at this
day: for haue we not had the Gospell
so longe time amongst vs, that the
most of vs, eyther neuer sawe, or haue
almost cleane forgotten what popery
meaneth. Well looke vnto it there-
fore, and let vs not thinke our selues
to bee happier then other Landes, be-
cause we haue the Gospell, vnlesse
we bringe forth such frutes of repen-
tance, and newenesse of life, as the
same doth require at our handes. For
to that ende hath he sent it amongst
vs, and therefore if it take not his
effecte wherefore it was sent, yet

let

let vs be sure that the Lorde will bee knowne to be Kinge at the Last, and it shall bee saide vnto vs as the holie Ghost doth testifie in a certaine place: because I haue called and yee refused, I haue stretched out my hand, and none would regarde, but ye haue despysed my counsell and woulde none of my correction, therefore I will also laugh at your destruction, and will mocke when your feare commeth like sudden desolation, and your destruction as a whirle winde, when affliction and anguish shall come vppon you, then shall they call but I will not answere, they shall seeke mee early, and shall not finde mee, and why: the reason is added, because they refused knowledge, and did not chuse the feare of the Lord, they woulde none of my counsell, but despysed my corrections.

Prov. 1. 24. 30.

And what other thinge is it, but a castinge awaye of the Lides counsell, when we will not giue such entertainement vnto his worde as the same requyreth at our handes; or how much better is it thē a despysing of his

corrections, when we will not be warned by so many spectacles of his anger, applying them rather vnto secondes causes, and so take occasion thereby vnto greater securitie. This sinne of casting away or despysing the Lords counsel, how greatly it doth displease him, our Saviour Christ, doth make knowne vnto vs, by pronoūcing of so grieuous woes, against those cities of Juda, wherein he had preached most, & done most of his great workes, because they repented not, affirming that it should be easier for Sodom & Gomorrha in ỹ iudgemēt day then for them. For saith he, if the great workes which are done amōgst you, had bene done in thē, they had repented long agoe in sackcloth & ashes: and may it not as well be saide of England, in this respect also, that it shall be easier for Fraunce, Flaunders, Spaine, and for Rome in the iudgement daye then for them? For who knoweth howe wonderfull theire repentance shoulde haue beene eare this time, if they hadde the Gospell preached amongst them, so longe as we haue had the same? And besides

Mat. 11. 24.

that,

that, theire wante of it hath made them to commit many sinnes, through Ignorance, because they knewe no better: but our hauinge of it hath left vs cleane without excuse, so that now wee haue no cloke for our sinnes, and therefore in conclusion, our condemnation must needes, be farre more iust and greater then theires, excepte wee repent in time. Thus much haue I thought good to speake vnto ẏ carelesse which are so soundly lulled asleepe in Iezabells bedde, a bedde of securitie: that if it be possible some of them may bee awaked whylest the day is present & prepare them selues to cóme vnto Christ. For admitte it be so that many haue gotten greate and excellent knowledge by the preachinge of the Gospell: yet what is this knowledge without repentance? surely euen deade, For who knoweth not that practise is it which giueth life therevnto, as the Apostle witnesseth in a certaine place, where hee hath these wordes: though I had all knowledge and knewe all secretes, yea, if I had faith that I coulde re-

Iohn. 15. 2.

Ebr. 3. 8.

1. Cor. 13. 2.

moue mountaines, and had no loue, it coulde profit me nothing. And as repentance or newnesse of conuesation is that which giueth life vnto our knowledge, so also it abandoneth from vs all vnlawfull pleasures, and not so onely but doth moderate and bring vs vnto the true vse of those that bee lawfull: as eating, drinking, sleeping, appareling our selues, and so forth, in euery of which necessitie, satan hath put marueylous snayres, and occasions of fallings. If temperance & sobrietie, which are speciall fruites belonging therunto do not somewhat beare rule ouer our affections, as those which are spiritually minded, doe very well vnderstand: vnto whom I will now turne my selfe, a litle, by the way of admonition, and so proceede vnto the iustifying faith, which I before haue promised to speake of, & which onely doth belonge vnto them. For those are they which in greate humilitie do iudge and condemne them selues, that they may not be condemned of the Lord. Those are they which are at continuall warfare not onely against all theire outward

wards senses and actions of the body that they behold not with pausing, nor consent with delight vnto euery vanitie, but also against the very motions and thoughtes of the mind to restraine and kill them when soeuer they begin to moue the affections to stray out after the desire of vnlawfull things, neyther are they greeued at these inward corruptions onely, but also it pincheth them euen to the very heart, that any auour thereof should be found about them: for they hate the very coate ẏ is bespotted with the flesh, as Saint Iude witnesseth. And therefore vse a marueylouse straightnesse euē against theire owne nature, in abridginge the same from ẏ plentie of those pleasures, and profittes which before time they haue delighted in. Stryuinge also, with greate violence to bringe theire mindes in such subiection vnto ẏ spirit, that neither prosperitie nor aduersitie, shall much moue theire mindes eyther to ioy or sorrowe, to be lifted up, or cast downe. And hauinge once thus mastered themselues in learninge perfectly to bee full, to bee

emptie, to abounde, and to haue no thinge, contentinge them selues in euery estate, whether it bee powerte, or riches, sickneſſe, health, or what soeuer: attributinge no happineſſe vnto the one, nor vnhappineſſe vnto the other; (becauſe that by theſe outward thinges no man knoweth whether hee bee worthy of loue or hate) but rather receyue euery thinge as from the
Rom.8.18: Lordes hand, to whom they liue, who alſo is become theire Father in Jeſus Chriſt, and therefore worketh all for the beſt vnto them. Thus is a perfecte eſtate, and certaine it is that there muſt bee no end of our repentance, before wee haue thus farre preuailed and gotten the victory ouer our rebellious nature, and yet is there no ſuch ſayednelle in it, neyther that after we haue once thus farre maiſtered our owne willes, that there we ſhould become ſecure and careleſs as if we were now at our iorneys end and needs goe no further. May but the blelſed man Job teacheth vs another leſſon, that our life here on earth is a continuall warfare, not onely againſt

flesh

flesh and blood, but also against spiri-
tuall wickednes in heauenly thinges,
against euerie thing that is exalted a-
gainst the knowledge of God, & must
haue no stay vntill euery affection in
vs be brought wholy and for euer vn-
der the obedience of Christ, which can
not be in this life, but in that which is
to come: and therefore our striuinge
must be with perseuerance, & let our
perseuerance be also with courage: for
the crowne which we labour for, is
worthie of running. But if our run-
ning doe fayle before wee come to the
thirde houre, let vs not fainte, but ra-
ther learne to goe: and if it bee so that
our goinge begin to waxe tedious be-
fore the firte houre be ouer past, yet
let vs not turne back againe for anie
thing, but rather lie downe and creepe,
so that it be forwards, and all is well;
yea if all naturall strength doe fayle Mat. 20.
before the nienth houre be ouer paste,
yet let our mindes and desires go for-
wards still in earnest prayer, and cal-
ling vpon the Lord for strength, in
heauy sighes and groanings, vnder the
burthen of our corruptions, which we

hate euen as hell, because they hinder our going forwards vnto goodnes, and can by no meanes auoyde them: & let that inward parte of vs neuer fayne, but goe forwards still, vntil the twelfth and last houre be past, in which wee shall receiue our wages. For the very grace and pryde of our Christian race is to persuere in the fruites & effectes of repentance, as our Sauiour Christ witnesseth: he that endureth to the end shall be safe.

Chap. IIII.

Of Faith, and the nature and effectes thereof, offred in the Gospell.

HAuinge shewed before, that the beginning of our faith (if it bee vnfayned) is feare, which feare doeth ingender in vs a godly sorrowe, out of which sorrowe also ryseth such a repentance, as is neuer to be repented off, and hauing spoken also of ꝑ fruits and effects which belong thereunto, & of the necessitie of it, that without the same, all other exercises of Religiõ are to

to no purpose, & by what meanes also we are brought thereunto, namely by the Law, which is our schoolemaster to bring vs vnto Christ: Now it remayneth that I proceede vnto the iustifying faith, which maketh all sure, and the hope whereof also is it which ministreth comfort and incouragemēt vnto vs in all those former tedious trauels. Yea and the possession therof after the heate of these conflictes is ouerpassed, bringeth so great peace of conscience vnto vs, as all the wisdome of flesh and blood shall neuer be able to attayn, as the holy Ghost doth witnes the same, in calling it a peace that passeth all vnderstanding. For when the troubled conscience hath wholly ye and for euer setled himselfe in the bowels of Iesus Christ, not onely in full perswasion of the free remission of all his sins, but also with stable purpose manfully to fight vnder his banner, yea, if it be to the renouncing of his own life: then may it be at peace, and boldly say with the Apostle in a holy boasting: I am perswaded, that neither height, nor depthe, nor angels, nor principali- Rom. 8.

palities, nor powers, nor things pre-
sent, nor thinges to come, neither
life nor death, nor anie thing, shall
bee able to separate mee from the
loue of God in Christ Iesus. For
this is the fruite that followeth our iu-
stifying faith, of which I haue rather
chosen to write, thē of the bare descrip-
tion of faith it selfe: yea and to say the
trueth, there is no way so profitable to
describe it, as in declaring the fruite &
comforte which it bringeth vnto vs,
which is to be assured that now there
is no wrath of God to come against
vs, but altogether grace and mercie
for Christes sake. And therefore to ye
ende that Ierusalem may be comfor-
ted at the heart, to the ende that the
church may bee throughly perswaded
that her trauell is at an ende, and all
her iniquities pardoned, so that now
she shall neuer receiue damage, nor
come into any danger of losinge Gods
fauour for the same any more: It shal
be good for vs to proceede vnto the
certaintie and vnmoueablenes of our
estate and condition, after that we be
once thus called vnto the hope of gods

kinge

kingdome. For as it is an assault which cannot be warranted vnto vs. by any fleshly righteousnesse that wee can doe; so in like sort, the certaintie therof cannot be decayed by any sinne which we at any time through infirmitie shall committe or fall into: no more then the weaknes of man is able to ouermatch the strength of God, or our infidelitie to make his faith to be of none effecte. And therfore these things considered, the sinnes of Gods children are no cause why their faith should be darkened, or their hope decayed, but rather there is great cause in them why their humilitie should be increased, and they more freely driuen out of themselues into the strength of Christ: for our saluation doth not rest in our selues, but in the Lorde, who hath decreed from euerlastinge to saue some, and therefore as vnpossible as it is for his decree to be altered, so vnpossible it is for that number which he hath thereunto appointed, to be damned. Heauen and earth shall passe away like a scrowle but, no one iote or title of the words shall passe till all things

Esay.40. thinges be accomplished. All flesshe is grasse, and the glorye thereof as the floure of the grasse, but the worde of the Lord endureth for euer. His giftes & callings are without repentance, he

Rom 11.29. Pro.16.4. hath created all thinges for himself, euen the wicked for the day of euil. And so it may be saide on the contrarie side, that he hath created his children for the day of saluation and glorie, and to

Heb.6.17. ỹ end ỹ the heires of promise may yet be more strengthned in this, he hath bound himselfe vnto thē by two immutable thinges, to the ende that we may hold fast the hope that is set before vs, which we haue as an ancore of ỹ soule both stedfast and sure: which two immutable thinges are these: his worde, and an oath. His worde, in that it is impossible that God should lie. As the prophet Samuell doth testifie the

Sam.15.29. same: The strength of Israel wil not lie nor repent him, for hee is not a man that should repent. And again,

Rom.23.19. that wicked Balaam could say thus much also: God is not a man that he should lie, nor the sonne of a man, that he should repeat him, hath he

saide, and shal he not doe? hath hee spoke, and shall he not accomplish? He hath saide that the righteous shall never be moued, but be had in euerlasting remembrance. He hath said that Israel shall be saued in the Lord: they shall not bee ashamed nor confounded world without end. He hath saide that he will be mercifull to our transgressions, and will remember our sinnes and iniquities no more. Let vs neuer thinke that the most highest doth at any time speake wordes in vayn. Surely as he hath created the earth not in vaine, but to be inhabited, so hee hath not saide in vaine to the seede of Iacob, seeke yee mee: Nay I the Lorde speake righteousnesse, and doe righteous thinges, as he testifieth by the Prophet Esay. Yea hee hath sworne the same also. And that is the seconde thing wherby he hath bound himselfe vnto vs, namely his oath: I haue sworne by my name, saith he, the worde is gone foorth of my mouth in righteousnes, and shall not returne again: ỹ euery knee shal bow vnto me, & all tõgues shal sweare by my name.

Psal. 112. 6.

Esay 45. 17.

Ierem. 31. 34.

Esay. 45. 18. 19. 20. 21.

By

By bowing of the knee, and swearing by the name of God, is meant ỹ whole seruice of God, wherein he will be serued and worshipped of his Church. And marke the emphasis of the word, for it is a worde of drawing: he hath sworne that they shall do it, will they, nill they: If they be Gods children, he will draw them, to glorifie him here in this life, and will also glorifie them in the life to come. Therfore ỹ faithfull cannot perish. And beside this, consider his oathe that he hath sworne, which is very plentifull in the Scriptures, as in ỹ Psalmes: I haue sworn by my holinesse that I will not faile Dauid. But in Esay it is notably described, where he hath these wordes: As I haue sworne that the waters of Noah shall no more goe ouer the earth, so haue I sworne that I will no more be angrie with thee, nor reproue thee: the mountaines shall remoue, and the hilles shall fall downe, but my mercie shall not departe from thee, nor the couenant of my peace fall away. So that hereby it is plaine that the estate of Gods

children is more surer then the mountaines and hils. Fitly therefore is the Church of Christ, compared vnto the house that is buylded vpon a rocke, which although the raine fall, ỹ winde blow, the floods come and beate vpon it, yet they shall neuer bee able to disturbe the same. And why, because it is buylded vpon a rocke, not a rocke of stone: for all such shall come to naught, but Christ Iesus, vpõ whom, all the faithfull are buyloed: for there is so neare a coniunction betwene thẽ, that Christ is theires, and they are his, God doth beholde all the righteousnes of Christ in them, and hath punished, all theire sinnes in him: and therefore as vnpossible as it is for God to be angry with Christ, so vnpossible it is for him to be angrie with vs, which belõg vnto him. Feare not therefore litle flocke: it is your heauenly Fathers pleasure to giue you a kingdome, nay he hath giuen it vnto vs already: for doth not the scripture say, that as hee is, (meaninge Christ) euen so are we in this life, what is Christ? Christ is freed from condemnation alreadie, Mat.7.26. Luke.12.32. 1.Ioh.4.17.

euen so are we, although we be in this life: Christ is the heire of heauen, and hath the same already in possession: in the same estate are we, how be it, not so fully, yet in as greate assurance, although we be in this life: and therefore marke it for a speciall poynt, that the promisses of eternall life, of saluation, and of being the sonnes of God, are still spoken of in the present tence, that they are the sonnes of God, and not that they shalbe; that they haue eternal life alreadie as it were, and not that they shall haue it. And in Saint Johns Gospel it is very plentiful: Verely verely I say vnto you (saith Christ) he that heareth my worde and beleeueth in him that sent me, hath eternal life, & shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life already, as though it were a thinge done & past, neuer to be called backe againe, as most certaine it is not, no more then the Father is to bee called backe againe from the worke of creation, or the Sonne from the worke of redemption, or the holy Ghost from the office of sanctification.

Rom. 8.
Ioh 3.
Ioh. 6.
Ioh. 5. 24.

ration. A notable testimony of this vnmoueable estate of the Church we haue in the Psalmes, where the holy Ghost vseth these wordes. If my children forsake my lawes and walke not in my iudgemēt, if they breake my statutes and kepe not my commaundementes: then will I visit theire transgressions with the rod, & theire iniquitie with strokes, but my louing kindnes willl I not take from them, nor falsifie my trueth, my couenant will I not breake, nor chaunge that which hath gone out of my lippes, according to that which is writtē in Malachie. I am thy *Lord*, I chaunge not, and the *Sonnes* of Iacob are not consumed. And therfore when the Lorde doth correcte vs, it is not to the end that we should bee consumed, but rather to put vs in minde that we haue sinned against him, and that we may bee spared in the euill day: and not condemned wi the world, but more of this in his due place. Whereby you see then, that in the worke of our saluation, the Lorde hath no respecte eyther to our sinnes, Psal 49.30 Mala 3.6. Psal. 94.12. 1. Cor. 11.32.

or vertues, but vnto his own vnchaũgable purpose, vnto his euerlastinge decree and couenant which can not be altered. Therefore in Deuteronomie, it is thus written: *The Lorde thy God is a mercifull God, he will not despise thee, nor forsake thee, neyther forget the couenant which he sware, vnto thy fathers, Abrahã, Isaac, and Iacob.* Saint Paul saith, *That if it be but a mans couenant when it is finished, no man doth abrogat, or adde anie thing therunto:* Much lesse in the couenant of God, which is writtẽ, not in paper or parchment, but in his euerlastinge decree & counsel, which is sealed also, not with a signet in ware, but wt the very finger and power of God, in the bloodshedding & death of his sõne Iesus Christ, and in rayling him again from ỹ same. Neyther hath he left it thus, but hath sealed the assurance thereof vnto our heartes also by his spirit, which doth testifie vnto our conscience, that wee are those to whom this new couenant doth belong, ỹ God is our Father, & we his children: and therefore are emboldened

Deut. 4. 31.

Gal. 3.

Rom. 8. 16.

2. Cor. 2. 16.

boldened through ẏ mind of Christ to
fly vnto him, in al our troubles, as our
stay and refuge to cast our whole care
vpon him, because ẏ we are fully per-
swaded, that it is he alone which ca- 1 Pet.5.7.
reth for vs. So ẏ now euen amongest
a multitude of cares which ẏ world is
ouerwhelmed in, we are become care-
lesse, not after the māner of a desperat
person, which contēneth meanes: but
rather by ẏ prerogatiue of a free mind,
which we haue, and do obtaine, both
after, & in the middest, of all christian &
lawful meanes, that are to be vsed, ca-
ring only for heauenly things. True it
is, that vnto the sight & iudgment of ẏ
world, there are none so miserable as
they which are thus minded, and why:
because a fewe outwarde things dee
satisfie them; because they seeke not
there own, but are more ready to take
wrong, thē do any; they looke still vn-
to those spirituall good things, which ẏ
Lord hath prouided for thē, & not man; Ebr.12.11
they make long strydes vnto that, &
striue to forget more & more this trash
& pelfe, ẏ is behind thē. And as it is w̄ Iohn 10.5
thē, in life, so also it is in religion: they

will heare no voyce, but the voyce of Christ in his worde, all other sounds are straunge vnto them, and therefore will not heare their voyces. So though Gal. 1.8. it be an Angell from heauen, they will not haue their faith to hange vpō men, but striue earnestly to get setled iudgement in them selues, that although the whole world bee ouerwhelmed with errours, so as ther be not a man left to instruct thē: yet they will not be offended at the matter, but haue sufficient in theire owne bosomes to keepe them in the truth: as Elyas, who although al Israel runne a whoring after Baall, 1. King. 19. 10. yet he wil constantly follow the liuing God; and as Micheas, who although al Balles Priestes flatter ỳ king of Israell, & speake pleasant things vnto him, 1. King. 22. 14. yet he wil speake nothing but ỳ which ỳ Lord hath put in his mouth; and wt ỳ Apostls also, who although many of Ioh 6.68 the Disciples forsake Christ, yet they knowe not whither to goe but vnto Mat 24. 28 him. Where ỳ deade carkas is, thither will the Eagles resorte, where Iesus Christ is, there wil ỳ faithful be. They Reuel 14.4. wil follow ỳ Lāb whither so euer he goeth,

goeth not only to ẏ breaking of bread, which Hipocrites wil do, but also vnto ẏ very death, whē ẏ tryal shal be made: for death is vnto them life, and therefore they long for it, as ẏ scripture doth very plentifully witnesse ẏ same, and Christ is all the gaine ẏ they seeke for. From whence I pray you commeth all these thinges, or what should mouē thē thus to despise this life & the things thereof? is it not the assurance which they have of ẏ heauenly life that is laid vp for thē in christ? this is some parte of the fruit of our iustifying faith, and yet not all: for looke further and wee shall see more & greater testimonies of the same then al these. For what is the cause why a great many are so valiant that theire feare is past, and they care not what man can do vnto them: yea they receyue euery bondage, as a liberty, & euery death, as a life, they take greatest occasiō of ioy in ẏ middest of those tormēts, whereby their enemyes goe about to make them most sorowfull, yea theire tormentors often times are more vexed and wearied in tormenting, then they them

selues are in bearing the tormentes, & why: because the Lord is with them, in euery place to comforte them as he hath promised by Esai the Prophet, saying, when thou walkest through ỳ waters, I will be with thee, & through the floudes ỳ they shall not ouerflowe thee, when thou goest through the fire, it shall not burne thee, nor the flames kindle vpon thee: the holy ghost meaneth not here, that the wicked, by their fgins ỳ they vse against Gods childrē, shall not be able to take awaye their naturall life, but their spirituall & heauenly life which afflictiōs, are meanes, to confirme and make more sure vnto them, yea & in far greater glory also, which they themselues are well experienced in, and therfore some of thē, al, though their torments were to be stoned, racked, & torne in sonder of wilde beastes, yet would not be deliuered, for the hope which they had of a better resurrection, as it is manifested in ỳ Hebreiwes: other whē ỳ stones were clattering about theire eares, prayed for theire enemies, as Steuen: but looke vnto all the Apostles, and you shall see, that the greater theire afflictions were,

Esai. 43. 2.

Heb. 11. 35.

Act. 7. 59.

were, the greater occasion they take Act.5.41.
to reioyce, because they were counted
worthy to suffer for ỳ name of Christ.
And I might come to the martyrs of
our time, who did not only reioyce in
imprisonmente, but also in the very
hote fire: yea they euen laughed at
destruction and death, as the booke of
Monumentes doeth very well shewe: Iob.5.22.
and as Iob also doth testifie that the
faithfull shall doe. These testimonies
may suffice to teach, that the peace of Iohn.14.27.
Gods children is such as the worlde and 16.22.
cannot giue, and their ioy such as no
man may take from them. O you fo-
lish tormenters, knowe you not those
engins which you vse against Gods
children to murther them withall, are
his owne creatures, which hee hath
promised shall be at league with them, Iob.5.23.
as it is written: The stones of ỳ fielde
shalbe at peace with thee, and ỳ beasts
of the field shalbe at league with thee.
Well therfore you may breake theire
heartes, but you shall neuer breake
their faithfulnesse: (mauger youre
beards) that shall be increased through
your cruelties. Knowe yee not what is
written,

Rom. 5. 3. written? Tribulation worketh patience; patience experience; experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.

See here what a heape of benefites afflictions bring vnto Gods children: your purpose is altogether set vpon euill, but beholde a wonderful good: for by it our patience is approued, both vnto our selues, & also vnto ẏ worlde. As for example, doth not the patience of Job which sprange out of his afflictions, speake vnto vs at this day: and againe, out of it floweth experience, another benefite which is as a seale vnto our consciences of the feare of God towards vs: that he will be our ready helpe in all distresses & dangers whatsoeuer: which is a chiefe meane to procure vs more earnestly to call vpō him in our troubles, and also to praise him in trueth for deliuerance.

Jam. 5. 11.

The thirde is hope, a benefit which resteth in the will, and maketh al sure: for whosoeuer hath it shall neuer be ashamed nor cōfoūded: but it lifteth him vp vnto an vnspeakeable reioycinge and comfort, which all the afflictions of this world are not able to quench: and

why?

why? because the loue of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy ghost, which is giuen vnto vs. Well then, these things considered, what hurt or dammage commeth vnto Gods children by afflictions? May what good is there, that their mindes are not chiefly garnished with in time of trouble? See here then how the expectations of our enemies are deceiued: for when they thinke that wee are moste ouercome and destroyed, then is oure strength greatly renued, and our conquest moste victorious, as it is writen: Though we be killed al the day long, and counted as sheepe for the slaughter, yet are wee more then conquerours through him that loueth vs. But if they will needes striue againste the streame (as Pharao did in the redde Sea) til they be ouerwhelmed therwith, let them do it rather by faire promises, thē by cruel threatnings, & sooner they shall preuaile. I speake now after ỳ manner of men: for in trueth they can neuer preuayle, but they themselues muste needes haue ỳ foyle, which way so euer they do striue. Wel, by this means they may sooner draw Gods children Rom. 36. 37

somewhat more to pause vpō their fained prosperities, as did Dauid, til such time as his foot had welnere slipt. But to drawe them cleane away frō ẏ path of life, that can they neuer doe: for sentence is gone out from euerlasting to the contrary, the church is builded vpon a foundation which the Lord hath layde, and not man, and therfore must nœdes stande sure, as it is written: the
1. Tim. 2. 16 foundation of God standeth sure, and hath this seale, the Lord knoweth who are his, and of those he wil not lose one
ohn. 6. 37. as it is in the 6. of John: All that the father giueth me, shal come to me, and him that commeth to mee, I caste not
ohn. 6. 39. awaye: for I came downe from heauen, not to doe my owne will, but the will of him that sent me: and this is the will of the father which hath sente me, that of al which he hath giuen me, I shoulde lose nothinge, but shoulde rayse it vp againe at the last day: nay rather then he will lœse one, hee will
uk. 1. 4. 5. 7 leaue nientie and nine in the wildernesse, and will shearch sorrowinge till he hath found it, and when hee findeth the same, he taketh it vp with ioy, layeth

eth it vpon his shoulders, bringeth it home, causeth his neighbours & frends to reioyce with him, for that one sheepe that was losse, and now is founde againe. And what doe all these things signifie vnto vs? surely euen the great care, and tender affection, which the Lord hath ouer his: not that his eyes can be darkened through any impediment, whereby he should be be subiect vnto losses: but this is rather an abasing of the Scriptures to our capacities, because such thinges are done amongest men, whereby is more liuely and cleerely set forth vnto vs, howe farre Gods children are frō perishing, as these Scriptures doo testifie the same also: He keepeth vs as the apple of his eye, and hydeth vs vnder the shadowe of his winges: He hath numbred our heires, and put our teares into a bottle: He will giue his Angels charge ouer thee, to keepe thee in all thy wayes, that thou hurte not thy foote against a stone. All which promises of cōfort, are not as bare scūds in the eares of Gods children, but rather as seales vnto their consciences, which

Psal. 17. 8.
Luke. 12. 7.
Psal. 34. 7.

which they are wel experienced in: for howe could it be els that they shoulde haue such boldnesse, and be so greatlye comforted in their distresses and afflictions, euen beyonde all reason or humaine wisdome whatsoeuer, as the Psalmes doe yeald vnto vs very plentifull testimonie of the same.

I will not be afraide (saith the Prophet Dauid) though ten thousande beset me rounds about. And again: though
Psal. 3. 6. I walke through the vale of the shadowe of death, yet will I feare none
Psal. 23. 4. ill: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staffe they doe comfort me. And in another place: The lord is my hope
Psal. 46. 2. 3. and helpe in trouble, ready to be found: therefore will I not feare, though the earth be mooued: though the mountaines doe fall into the middest of the Sea: and though the waters doe rage and bee troubled, so that the Mountaynes doe shake at the sourges thereof, yet there is a riuer whose streames shall make glad the citie of our God, euen the Sanctuarie of the Tabernacle of the most highest.

And what is this Ryuer which

the

the Prophet by the spirit of prophecie speaketh off here: euen Jesus Christ, who by the will of his heauenlye Father, is made vnto vs the fountayne and head spring of all goodnesse: By the streames which flowe from him, wee vnderstand the most comfortable consolations of the Spirite of God, which doeth testifie vnto our spirites, that we are the children of God: and not children onely, but also heires, euen heires of God, and heires annexed with Christ. A wondertull exaltation: and beholde we haue two witnesses of the same: that is, the Spirite of God, and our owne spirites: the Spirite of God, in that it pricketh vs forwardes vnto prayer, not onely in publike places, but also in priuate corners, where none seeth but the Lorde: euen with vnspeakeable groaninges, which can not otherwise bee expressed. In that also it stirreth vs vp vnto other exercises of Religion: as the worke of mortification, dyinge vnto sinne, liuinge vnto righteousnesse, yea, and to suffer persecution

Rom. 8. 17.

when

when occasion is offred, because that by the same spirite we know that our labour shall not be in vaine: our own spirites also, in that wee doe not stubbornely resist these good motions of Gods spirite, but strive rather by all possible meanes to make our selues tractable thereunto, being vexed euen vnto great sorrowe at our vnwillingnesse, and reioycing with all exceeding ioy when we haue gotten any strēgth against the same. And thus you see what a wonderfull priuiledge al those haue, which doe vnfaynedly come vnto Christ: for they shall neuer pearish, neither shall any take them out of his hande. Well then, these thinges consi-
Iohn.10 28. dered, what greate iniurie doe they vnto their owne soules, which denye this doctrine of predestination, or foreknowledge: doe they any other then denie the verye strength and pride of the Gospell: for what better Gospell can we haue, then to heare that ỹ children of God can neuer pearish: that nether their sinnes, nor the deuils, shal euer bee able to pull them out of his hand: & that the Lord in Christ hath

decreed

decreed the same from everlastinge, what a miserable case I say are they in which bee ignorant of this, nay, which stubburnly resist it, and will not be instructed therin. How is it possible for such to praye with any hope to receyue, when it is done with so litle credit; which way is it possible for them to receyue any comforte whose faith is uncumbred with so many doubtes; howe unreuerently do they thinke of God who doe imagine of him, as of a mortall man, which is ignorant in the beginning of those thinges, that he will doe afterwardes, and whose affection is chaunged to day, from that that he purposed yesterdaye. Surely these are the daungers, which they do dayly fall into, that eyther are ignorant, or haue no credit in this poynt of doctrine, which is the strength and foundation of all other poyntes of our christian knowledge, and without the which (let our knowledge bee neuer so much otherwise) yet wee are no better then those which Saincte James speaketh of: waueringe minded and therfore vnconstante in all our wayes, Iam. 1.8

but to leaue these vnto him, who is both able and also wil teach them better, in his good time, if they belonge vnto his holy election, and to turne to our former byase; which is the vnmoueable estate and condition of Gods Children; the ground and pillar of our faith; the strength whereby we stande; and the chiefest thinge wherein wee haue to reioyce as our Sauiour Christ witnesseth, in the admonition that hee giueth vnto his Apostles: where hee willeth them, that they shoulde not reioyce in this that the deuils or wicked spirites were subiect vnto them, but rather in this, that theire names were written in heaue, which is a thinge not done in time, but beyonde all times, euen before the Lord was. A meruaylouse benefitte, and vnspeakable. I call it vnspeakable, because it cā not be attayned vnto, by any fleshly wisdome, which is altogether beastly in this behalfe: for it is a secrete, which is more hid from y natural man, then the iudgement day. For y remēbraunce of y great iudgmēt doth at some time make thē tremble, where

Luke. 10. 20.

theire

theire guyltie consciences, do beginne to accuse them, and when they see, and heare that those figge leaues, do begin, yea and are already put forth, which our Saviour Christ spake of, to declare that summer is neare: but tell them of the assurance which Gods children haue in themselues, of theire saluation in Christ; and howe the same hath beene from everlasting: and thou shalt see how farre off they will be, from giuing any credit; nay, they will euen laugh thee to scorne, and thinke, that if there be any foole in the worlde thou art hee, as we see diuers examples of it in scripture. The wicked Iewes, thought that the Apostles, had beene drunken, when they spake the great workes of God, with new tongues, as the spirit gaue them vtterance. Festus likewise iudged Paul to be beside him selfe, and madde, when he began to speake once of the resurrection from death. And no maruel though ỳ wicked are so farre of from receyuing this heauenly treasure, because it is a newe name ỳ no man knoweth, saue he ỳ receyueth it; it is a secret which only be-

Mat. 24. 32.

Act. 2. 13 & 26. 24.

Reuel. 2. 17.

longeth vnto Gods children, as it is
writte in ỹ Psalmes: the secretes of ỹ
Lord, are reueyled vnto them that
feare him, and his couenant to giue
them vnderstanding. Will all then it re-
mayneth that wee bee thankfull vnto
God, who hath vouchsafed vs from e-
uerlasting, this priuiledge, to bee his
Sonnes, yea, and hath warranted it
Rom.8.16. by so sure a seale as can not be altered,
euen the earnest of his owne spirit.
The Apostles are very plentifull, in
yealdings of thankes vnto God for
this benefit, as the chiefest of all other.
Ephe.1.3.4. Blessed be God saith Sainte Paull
euen the Father of our Lorde Jesus
Christ, which hath blessed vs with all
spiritual blessings, in heauenly thinges,
in Christ, and alegginge this as the
chiefest: for he hath chosen vs in him,
before ỹ foundation of the worlde, ỹ
we should be holy, and without blame
before him in loue. And againe in an
2.Thes.2.13. other place, we ought to be thankefull
alwayes vnto God for you brethren,
because hee hath from the beginninge
chosen you vnto saluation, through
the sanctification of the spirit and the
faith

faith of truth. These & such like places, are very plentifully founde in scripture, which to repeate I shoulde be tedious, therfore letting them passe, and to speake more plainely vnto our capacity of the matter: Gods children which are effectually called, and doe feele the assurance of this inheritance in them selues, are thankfull, yea, and so thankfull as ỳ same doth carry substance with it, euen to the bewraing of them, vnto the world, so that ỳ wicked men do beholde the image of God in them, and do reuerence them greatly for theire vertues, although theire giftes otherwise be but slender, yea, and are more afraied oft times to committe sinnes in theire sighte, then in the presence of God, who seeth all thinges, and from whose eyes, nothing can be hidde. Yet such is theire blindnesse, and such is the strength of grace in the other, as for example: did not Herod that cruell King who had no feare of God at all before his eyes, yet feare and reuerence John Baptist: because (saith the text,) that he knewe him to bee a iust, and a

Ebr. 4. 13.

Mar. 6. 20.

holy man, yea and did many things after his counsell: so likewise Felix who although he were wholy giuē ouer to fleshe lustes, yet trembled, at the preaching of Paul, whē he spake of ỳ iudgmēt to come. Herein thē we may perceyue the trueth of that saying, which the holy Ghost vseth in the Psalmes: the Lord is greatly to be feared, in the assemblie of his Saintes: as the same also may appeare in ỳ strength of their prayers. how mightely they doe prevaile with God, not only for the attayninge of spirituall and inwarde comfortes, but also of outwarde deliverances, as the scripture for warrant of the same is very plentiful: which we may see in the deuyding of the red sea; the ouerthrowe of the enemies in the wildernesse; the downe fall of the wals of Jericho; and the staying of the course of the Sunne: all which things were procured through faith, and prayer of the Saintes, tendinge still to the deliverance of Gods children, and ouerthrowe of his enemies. Other examples there are also, which to repeat I shoulde bee tedious, and therefore will

Act. 24. 26.

will satisfie my selfe, in noting the places. 2. Kings 6. 16. 17. Daniel. 6. 22. and 3. 25. 26. 27. wherein likewise we may behold, the greate loue & care which the Lorde hath ouer his church. and howe vnpossible it is for those to quaile, who haue the eares of the almightie continually so open vnto their cryes, and his helping hand so attentiue for theire deliuerance, eyther in iudgement towardes the wicked, or in mercy towardes them: and as he is attentiue vnto them, so likewise they are importunate in theire prayers vnto him, as our Saviour Christ doth witnesse in Luke: that his children do crye day and night vnto him, and therefore can not but bee aduenged of theire wrõges, and this is a speciall fruite of faith, a sure token of greate trust & confidẽce, ỳ benefit whereof we all doe both feele & find vnto this day: for how many treasõs, & treacheries haue beene wrought against our gratious Prince, frõ time to time, by ỳ man of sin & his impes, both by purpose of murther, & other meanes also: to put out the candell of Gods worde which so clearely doth shine amongest vs, and Luke. 18. 1.

which he hath vsed here, as a chiefe meane to vphold & maintaine amongst vs, yet none of them coulde prevaile, but are taken at halfe turne, and fast snared in the ginne that they laide for others: as vpon London bridge and other partes of the citie, we haue a plentifull spectacle of the same. Which thing beinge brought to passe, let vs not impute it, vnto our owne cunninge or pollicy, but vnto the great mercy of God, who is the watchman of Israel, that neuer sleepeth nor slombereth, and hath beene procured thereunto, by the importunate outcryes of his Saintes: For otherwise, eare this time we should haue had a blacke and glowmy day. Well ỹ Lord be blessed, for all his mercies towardes our land, and let vs loue his children, for whose sakes (no doubt of it) we do enioy this so greate peace and plenty. Know you not ỹ the Lord would not bringe cõfusion, vpõ ỹ old world so long as Noah, & his familie were amongest them, but as sone as they were once closed vp in ỹ arke, thẽ immediatly came destruction vpon ỹ rest, & they were ouerwhelmed

Gen. 7. 16.

with

with waters: be not forgetful likewise how that the Angels which were appoynted of God, to execute his vengeance vpō Sodome and Gomorrha, could doe nothing vntill Lot and his two daughters were gone out: & then streight wayes came fire & brimstone vpon the rest. Phinees in like maner, through his zeale, turned away the wrath of God from all Israel. And Moyses likewise (through importunate begging) stayed the plague.

Gen. 12. 16.

Rom. 25. 18.

Rom. 16. 47

Thus you see how that peace and prosperitie is continued amongest the wicked, not for themselues, but for the great regarde and care that God hath of his church, which is amongst them: yea and whole Cities or Countreyes oft times are preserued from plagues, for some one of them, as the same is notablie descrybed in the talke which the Lord had with Abraham, vpon the plaine of Mamre; who woulde haue spared those fiue great cities for ẏ sakes of tenne righteous men, if they coulde haue beene founde amongest them. Were you see then further, that this great loue, and assurance of saluation, which

Gen. 18. 32.

which God doth bestowe vpon his children, is no meane to make them secure or careles, as some blasphemers doe oft times obiecte, but rather more fearefull, more dutifull, and more earnest in prayer: because that when they beholde such a wonderfull mercie of God towards them, they thinke (as the trueth is in deede) that they can neuer be thankfull inough vnto him. Then they begin to giue duties both to God & men: then they walke lawfully in lawfull vocation: then the husbandman, or handicraftes man, Luc.6.31. doeth seeke the kingdome of God as well in the fieldes or towne, as in the Church; as well in walking in theire vocation, as by frequentinge of Sermons: Take me not grosly, I meane they put in practise that abroad, which they learne in the Church. Their yea is yea, and their nay is nay: and therefore to conclude, we can neuer doe any duetie in trueth, before the assurance of Gods kingdome doe send vs thereunto: for Gods children only are carefull, and all the worlde besides careles. Luc.5.

Thus

THus you haue heard (although rudely yet I hope truely) described vnto you, a pathway vnto Christ. The first step thereunto is a true sight of our sinnes, with godly sorrow, because we are subiect thereunto. The second is vnfayned repentance for the same, with newnes of life and conuersation, without the which all outward exercises of Religiõ are to no purpose. The thirde and last is faith in Christ Iesus, which then is truely in vs, whẽ repentance and godly sorrow goe before it: for other wise it is presumption, as repentance without it is desperation. The fruite which followeth is peace of conscience, that passeth all vnderstanding, and such a ioy as no man shall euer be able to take from vs: for we can neuer perish, but all thinges shall be for the best vnto vs. Cap. 1. Cap. 24 Cap. 1. Ioh. 16. 26.

We thinke Sainte Paul to the Romanes is very plaine in this matter, where he hath these wordes: Moreouer whom he predestinate, them also he called; whom he called, them also he iustified; and whom he iustified, them also he glorified. Calling here hath the